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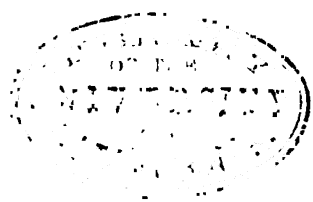

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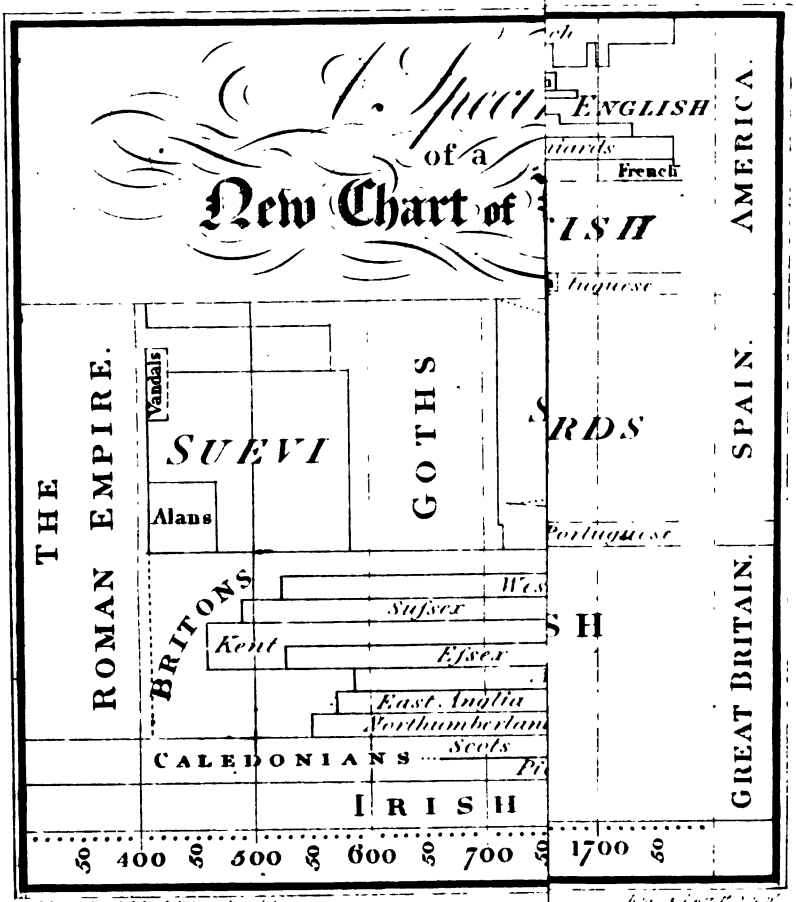

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LECTURES ON HISTORY,

AND

GENERAL POLICY;

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ESSAY

ON A COURSE OF LIBERAL EDUCATION

FOR CIVIL AND ACTIVE LIFE.

By JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL.D. F.R.S.

AC. IMP. PETROP. R. PARIS. HOLM. TAURIN. AURAL. MED. PARIS. HARLEM. CANTAB. AMERIC. ET PHILAD. SOCIUS.

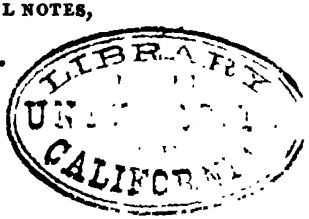
..... Juvat exhaustos iterare labores,
Et sulcata meis percurrere litora remis.
BUCHANANI FRANCISCANUS.

A NEW EDITION,

WITH NUMEROUS ENLARGEMENTS:

COMPRISING A LECTURE ON "THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES," FROM THE AUTHOR'S AMERICAN EDITION; AND ADDITIONAL NOTES,

By J. T. RUTT.



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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THESE Lectures, originally delivered by the author in his capacity of academical tutor, first appeared from the press in 1788, in one volume 4to. In 1793, there was a second edition, in two volumes 8vo, which has been long out of print. The work having been frequently sought after, it was thought desirable to republish that edition in one volume, with such corrections and improvements by the author as might be supplied from his American edition, scarcely known in this country, but with which a friend obligingly furnished me. The further improvements contemplated, were additional notes of reference, and such occasional illustrations of a subject from other writers, as the assigned limits would allow, and which might serve to promote the author's truly honourable purpose of forming "the minds of youth to virtue," by assisting the progress of liberal education.

My attachment to the memory of Dr. Priestley, and, I trust, a desire to contribute all in my power to the advancement of those laudable designs

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which formed the favourite occupations of his life, induced me readily to undertake, on this occasion, the office of Editor. How I have succeeded in executing that office is now submitted to the readers of this volume, and especially to those among them whose own pursuits have prepared them to appretiate the success or failure of such an undertaking.

Where my information happened to serve me, I have occasionally corrected the author's references and quotations; but I have endeavoured, and I hope with success, that he should not be made answerable for the correctness of any references, or the pertinence of any quotations or remarks annexed, exclusively, to this edition of his work. For all such I am alone accountable, excepting the notes with the initials R. T., which a reader may readily wish to have been more numerous. These were kindly communicated by my friend Mr. Richard Taylor, and will be peculiarly acceptable to every studious inquirer into the earlier records of British history.

J. T. RUTT.

Clapton, Oct. 26, 1825.

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TO

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN, Esq.*

Dear Sir,

These Lectures were formerly addressed to you as a pupil†; and I shall think myself happy if what you say you heard with pleasure formerly, do not disappoint you now, which is often the case with the objects of our fond admiration in younger years. Consider, however, that these lectures were not intended for proficients, but for students unfurnished with the very rudiments of historical and political knowledge, and that you attended them at the age of sixteen.

With this allowance, it may give you pleasure (as the motto from my favourite Latin poet expresses it) to go over the ground you have formerly trodden. Remember, then, that you

* This gentleman, who has been long resident in the United States, was in 1792 M.P. for the borough of Calne.—*Ed.*

† In the Academy at Warrington. See infra, p. vii.—*Ed.*

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lectures which they had been used to attend, other courses might be introduced, which would bring them acquainted with such branches of knowledge as would be of more immediate use to them when they should come into life. With this view I planned and composed three courses,—one, on *History in general;* another, on *the History of England;* and a third, on *the Laws and Constitution of England,*—syllabuses of which will be seen in my former *Essay on Education* *.

The publication of Blackstone's *Commentaries* †, and of Sullivan's *Law Lectures,* has made it unnecessary to publish the third of these courses, and Henry's *History of England* has superseded the second; though my plans will be seen to be, in several respects, more comprehensive than theirs, especially than that of Dr. Blackstone. But no publication that I have yet seen will probably be thought to supersede the lectures contained in this volume. For beside what relates to *history,* I endeavoured to bring into it as many articles of *miscellaneous knowledge* as I could, in order to enlarge the minds of young men, and to give them liberal views of many important subjects ‡, and such as could not so well be brought before them in any other course.

* First published in 1765.—*Ed.*

† In 1765. See *Biog. Hist. of Blackstone* (1782), p. 26, note.—*Ed.*

‡ In the same spirit Dr. Priestley had thus written in 1765:

"My general design is beautifully expressed in the following lines of Thomson (*Liberty,* part 5), describing the future happy state of Great Britain.

'. . . . . Instead of barren heads,
Barbarian pedants, wrangling sons of pride,
And truth-perplexing metaphysic wits,
MEN, PATRIOTS, CHIEFS, and CITIZENS are formed.'"

Essay, p. iii.—*Ed.*

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So far, therefore, was I from endeavouring to keep strictly to the title which I first gave these lectures, viz. *on History*, that I studied to exceed those bounds as much as, with any propriety, I possibly could; and I soon found that, under the head of *objects of attention to an historian*, or a reader of history, I could easily bring the very important subject of *general policy*, or an account of those things which principally contribute to render the great societies of mankind happy, numerous, and secure, with which young men of fortune cannot be too well acquainted. The reader must not, however, expect to find any thing more than the outline of this branch of knowledge. For general principles are all that can be taught at a place of education. The details of things must be left to men's researches afterwards. Through the whole I hope I have kept in mind that the most important object of education is to form the minds of youth to virtue; and therefore I have made a point of omitting no fair opportunity of introducing such observations and reflections as appeared to me to have that tendency, especially at the beginning and the close of the course.

I must also remind the reader, that all he is to expect from these lectures is a judicious selection and arrangement of the knowledge that was to be collected from books which were extant at the time when they were composed. Many of the observations, however, are, as far as I know, original; but, at this distance of time, it is not in my power to distinguish those that are so, from those which I collected from other writers. I cannot in all cases even distinguish

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my own composition from the extracts which I made from the works of others; and not having at first any intention of publishing these Lectures, I neglected to take notes of the books that I quoted. But this is of little consequence to the reader; it being sufficient for him if the *facts* may be depended upon, and the *observations* just. It will be found, however, that I have enlarged this course since the syllabus of it was first printed *, with many valuable articles, collected from works which have been published since, especially Dr. Smith *on the Wealth of Nations*, and Stuart's *Principles of Political Œconomy;* and my wish is, that by the illustration of some general principles in such works as these, I may excite in youth a desire to become better acquainted with them.

These Lectures will be found to be of very unequal lengths, and the reason of this will not always appear. But this circumstance is of little consequence, either to the reader, or to any person who may think proper

* In 1765. The following paragraphs then annexed to the Syllabus are worthy of preservation.

"Together with the study of history, I would advise that more attention be given to geography than I believe is generally given to it; particularly to that branch of it which may with propriety be called commercial geography, exhibiting the state of the world with respect to commerce, pointing out the most advantageous situations for carrying it on; and more especially, noting those articles, in the natural history of countries which are, or may be, the proper subjects of commerce.

"This branch of knowledge is, indeed, as yet very much confined. We are probably strangers to some of the most useful productions of the earth on which we live: but a general attention once excited to the subject, by teaching it to youth in all places of liberal education, would be the best provision for extending it. Then gentlemen, in their voyages and travels, would have their attention more strongly engaged to every thing that appeared new or curious. Also merchants, and captains of

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to make use of them in his own lecturing. My method, as in all my other lectures, was to read the text, and illustrate it by a familiar address, questioning the pupils very particularly on the subject of the former lecture before I proceeded to a new one; and on some of the subjects I happened to have much more to say to them, and to inquire of them, than on others. Also, in going over the Lectures a second time, I paid little regard to the divisions I had first made, but took in more or less matter, as I found convenient at the time; and this I would advise other lecturers to do.

The only course of lectures, composed and delivered while I was at Warrington, that I have any thoughts of publishing beside this, is one on *the Theory of Language and Universal Grammar*, which was printed* for the use of the students, but not published. If this be done at all, it will be in conjunction with the additions that Dr. Kippis made to it, when he did me

ships, would not neglect to bring home specimens of a variety of articles besides those which were the principal object of their voyage.

"A knowledge of chemistry is absolutely necessary to the extension of this useful branch of science. And it is a pleasing prospect to those who wish well to the flourishing state of commerce, that chemistry has, of late years, been more generally attended to than ever, and that it is daily introduced into more places of liberal education. What losers men may be for want of commercial geography, and of chemistry as a foundation for it, may be conceived from a variety of cases. Without some knowledge of this kind, a man might for instance be digging for the ore of a baser metal, and overlook another of much more value, which might lie in his way. So great an advantage might he miss for want of knowing such ores. And it is more than probable, that the countries to which we trade for articles of small account are capable of furnishing us with commodities of much greater value, and will be found to do it, as soon as our attention is sufficiently awake to discover them." *Essay*, &c. pp. 67, 68.—*Ed.*

* In 1762.—*Ed.*

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the honour to make it his text-book at the Academy in Hoxton *. This joint work I wish to remain as a monument of our friendship, and especially of the gratitude I owe him for his kindness to me in a period in which I wanted a friend. He and Dr. Benson were some of the first whom I could truly place in that class †.

The *Lectures on Oratory and Criticism*, which I composed at Warrington, have been some time before the public ‡. In them I have made great use of

* On this subject the author thus expressed himself in a note to the preface of his American edition in 1803:

"Dr. Kippis being now dead [in 1795], and my attention having been long drawn from this subject, I have no longer any thoughts of publishing those lectures; unless I should find more leisure for the purpose than I at present foresee, and I should live to complete various other schemes that I have in view. But at my time of life this can hardly be expected."

Those Lectures have been very lately reprinted, with the addition of Dr. Kippis's notes, &c., in vol. xxiii. of Dr. Priestley's Works. Of that volume there is, also, a small impression for publication.—*Ed.*

† Referring, in his *auto-biography*, to the embarrassments he encountered from contracted circumstances on entering into life, Dr. Priestley says of these his earliest friends, "I shall always remember their kindness to me at a time when I stood in so much need of it."—*Mem.* 8vo, p. 26; 12mo, p. 24.

Dr. Kippis, with whom, in early life, I had the pleasure and advantage of some acquaintance, was endeared to his associates by amiable and excellent qualities. To the public he is well known by various writings, especially by the valuable additions he has contributed to the stores of British biography. This subject he was indeed well fitted to illustrate from habits of patient inquiry, and a disposition to be just and impartial; though, perhaps, in a very few instances, he may have been led astray, from an inclination to commend rather than to censure.

Dr. Benson, who died in 1762, aged 62, was the author of several publications; all designed to establish the authenticity or to elucidate the meaning of the Christian Scriptures. See his Life by Dr. Towers, *Biog. Brit.* (1780) vol. ii. pp. 201 to 208.—*Ed.*

‡ They were published in 1777; and have been lately reprinted in the just-mentioned vol. xxiii. of Dr. Priestley's Works.—*Ed.*

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Dr. Hartley's doctrine of *association of ideas* *, which appears to me to supply an easy solution of almost all the difficulties attending this curious subject, and gives

* Illustrated in his justly celebrated *Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty, and his Expectations;* first published in 1749.

In 1755 "M. l'Abbé Jurain, Professeur de Mathématiques à Reims," published there a French translation of the first part,—on Man's *frame*,—with notes from *Buffon*, to whom his work is dedicated. The learned Professor joins Hartley with Locke, or rather assigns to him the superiority when they are explaining "la manière dont se forment dans les hommes les idées du juste et de l'injuste, du bien et du mal moral;" but he declines to translate the second part of the *Observations*, chiefly because "l'auteur y renouvelle l'ancienne erreur des Origenistes contre l'éternité des peines de l'enfer."

Dr. Hartley, who was an eminent physician, died in 1757, aged 53. His work attracted Dr. Priestley's attention during his academical education, (see his *Mem.* 8vo, p. 19; 12mo, p. 16); and in 1775 he published Hartley's *Theory of the Human Mind, on the principle of the Association of Ideas, with Essays relating to the subject of it.* There was a second edition in 1790. The *Essays* are reprinted in vol. iii. of Dr. Priestley's Works.

It appears to have been unknown to Dr. Priestley, as well as to the writer of the biographical *Sketch* prefixed to the *Observations* in 1791, that Dr. Hartley first proposed his theory, in Latin, to the medical scholars of Europe, in *Conjecturæ quædam de Sensu, Motu et Idearum Generatione* annexed, in 1746, to his account of Mrs. Stevens's medicines for the stone, entitled *De Lithontriptico.* These *Conjecturæ* contain, with a few variations, the first twenty-two propositions. The concluding paragraph I cannot forbear to quote, and to attempt a literal translation, as it so well describes the important Christian considerations to which the author was led by his curious speculations.

"Religionis autem revelatæ, ut de eâ præcipuè dicam, nitorem et firmitatem semper increscere, unà cum veræ scientiæ incrementis, manifestum erit cuivis recolenti, quot et quanta ejus documenta a viris eruditis et piis prolata sint, ex quo instaurari cœpit res literaria, in regionibus hisce occidentalibus. Neque licebit alicui, ut mihi quidem videtur (quicquid vel ipse animo habeat, vel inde profecturum suspicentur alii) veritatem quamlibet novam eruere, quin simul lucem affundat religioni Christianæ, veritatum omnium principio et fini; acceleretque exoptatissimum illud sæculum futurum, sub quo omnia tandem subjicienda sunt ei, qui est *via et veritas et vita.*"

"But as to revealed religion, of which I principally speak, its brightness and evidence have always increased with the acquisitions of genuine

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us solid maxims, instead of arbitrary fancy. In this extensive application of the doctrine of association to the business of criticism, I think I have some claim to merit.

science. It is manifest to every reflecting mind, that great and numerous proofs on this subject have been afforded by learned and pious men, in these western regions, ever since the revival of letters. Nor, in my judgment, can any one (whatever he may design, or others expect from him), establish any new truth, without, at the same time, pouring some light on Christianity, the beginning and the end of all truths, and thus accelerating that ardently desired future age, when all things shall be subdued unto him who is *the way, the truth, and the life.*" See *Monthly Repository* (1818), vol. xiii. p. 500.

The learned and pious writer, when concluding this paragraph, had perhaps in his recollection a passage in which lord Bacon has described "sacred and inspired divinity" as "the sabbath and port of all men's labours and peregrinations."—*Ed.*

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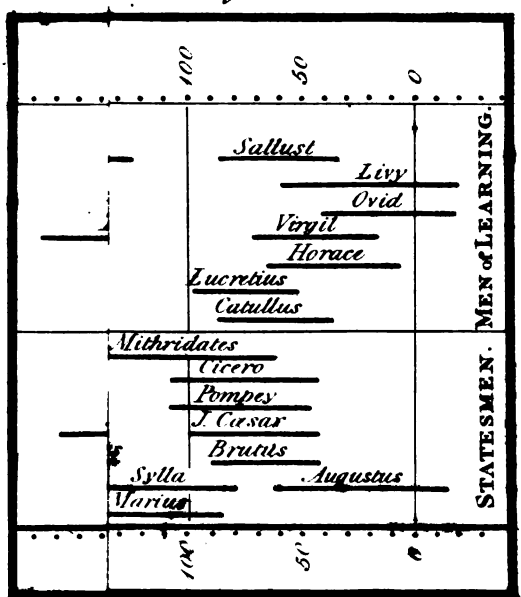

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AN ESSAY

ON A COURSE OF

LIBERAL EDUCATION

FOR CIVIL AND ACTIVE LIFE.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1765.

IT seems to be a defect in our present system of public education, that a proper course of studies is not provided for gentlemen who are designed to fill the principal stations of *active life*, distinct from those which are adapted to the *learned professions*. We have hardly any medium between an education for the counting-house, consisting of writing, arithmetic, and merchants'-accounts, and a method of institution in the abstract sciences: so that we have nothing liberal that is worth the attention of *gentlemen*, whose views neither of these two opposite plans may suit.

Formerly, none but the clergy were thought to have any occasion for learning. It was natural therefore, that the whole plan of education, from the grammar-school to the finishing at the university, should be calculated for their use. If a few other persons, who were not designed for holy orders, offered themselves for education, it could not be expected that a course of studies should be provided for them only. And indeed, as all those persons who superintended the business of edu-

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cation were of the clerical order, and had themselves been taught nothing but the rhetoric, logic, and school-divinity, or civil law, which comprised the whole compass of human learning for several centuries, it could not be expected that they should entertain larger or more liberal views of education; and still less that they should strike out a course of study, for the use of men who were universally thought to have no need of study; and of whom few were so sensible of their own wants as to desire any such advantage.

Besides, in those days, the great ends of human society seem to have been but little understood. Men of the greatest rank, fortune and influence, and who took the lead in all the affairs of state, had no idea of the great objects of wise and extensive policy; and therefore could never apprehend that any fund of knowledge was requisite for the most eminent stations in the community. Few persons imagined what were the true sources of wealth, power, and happiness in a nation. Commerce was little understood, or even attended to; and so slight was the connexion of the different nations of Europe, that general politics were very contracted. And thus, men's views being narrow, little previous furniture of mind was requisite to conduct them.

The consequence of all this was, that the advances which were made to a more perfect and improved state of society were very slow; and the present happier state of things was brought about, rather by an accidental concurrence of circumstances, than by any efforts of human wisdom and foresight. We see the hand of Divine Providence in those revolutions which have gradually given a happier turn to affairs, while men have been the passive and blind instruments of their own felicity.

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But the situation of things at present is vastly different from what it was two or three centuries ago. The objects of human attention are prodigiously multiplied; the connexions of states are extended; a reflection upon our present advantages, and the steps by which we have arrived to the degree of power and happiness we now enjoy, has shown us the true sources of them; and so thoroughly awakened are all the states of Europe to a sense of their true interests, that we are convinced, the same supine inattention with which affairs were formerly conducted is no longer safe; and that, without superior degrees of wisdom and vigour in political measures, every thing we have hitherto gained will infallibly be lost, and be quickly transferred to our more intelligent and vigilant neighbours. In this critical posture of affairs, more lights and superior industry are requisite, both to ministers of state, and to all persons who have any influence in schemes of public and national advantage; and consequently a different and a better furniture of mind is requisite to be brought into the business of life.

This is certainly a call upon us to examine the state of *education* in this country, and to consider how those years are employed which men pass previous to their entering into the world: for upon this their future behaviour and success must in a great measure depend. A transition which is not easy can never be made with advantage; and therefore it is certainly our wisdom to contrive, that the studies of youth should tend to fit them for the business of manhood; and that the objects of their attention and turn of thinking in younger life, should not be too remote from the destined employment of their riper years. If this be not attended to, they must necessarily be mere novices upon entering the great world, be almost unavoidably

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embarrassed in their conduct, and, after all the time and expense bestowed upon their education, be indebted to a series of blunders for the most useful knowledge they will ever acquire.

In what manner soever those gentlemen who are not of any learned profession, but who in other capacities have rendered the most important services to their country, came by that knowledge which made them capable of it, I appeal to themselves, whether any considerable share of it was acquired till after they had finished their studies at the university. So remote is the general course of study at places of the most liberal education among us from the business of *civil life*, that many gentlemen, who have had the most liberal education their country could afford, have looked upon the real advantage of such an education as very problematical, and have either wholly dispensed with it in their own children, or, if they have sent their sons through the usual circle of the schools, it has been chiefly through the influence of custom and fashion, or with a view to their forming connexions which might be useful to them in future life. This appears by the little solicitude they show about their sons being grounded in those sciences, in which they themselves might possibly have been considerable proficients, when they applied to them; but which, from their being foreign to the business of life in which they were afterwards engaged, they have now wholly forgotten.

Indeed the severe and proper discipline of a grammar-school is become a common topic of ridicule; and few young gentlemen, except those who are designed for some of the learned professions, are made to submit to the rigours of it. And it is manifest, that when no foundation is laid in a grammatical knowledge of the learned languages (which, in a large or public

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school, cannot be done without very strict discipline, and a severe application on the part both of the master and scholar), youth can be but ill qualified to receive any advantage from an university education. Young gentlemen themselves so frequently hear the learning which is taught in schools and universities ridiculed, that they often make themselves easy with giving a very superficial attention to it, concluding from the turn of conversation in the company they generally fall into, and which they expect to keep, that a few years will confound all distinction of learned and unlearned, and make it impossible to be known whether a man had improved his time at the university, or not.

These evils certainly call for redress; and let a person be reckoned a projector, a visionary, or whatever anybody pleases, that man is a friend of his country who observes and endeavours to supply any defects in the methods of educating youth. A well-meaning and a sensible man may be mistaken, but a good intention, especially if it be not wholly unaccompanied with good sense, ought to be exempted from censure. What has occurred to me upon this subject I shall, without any further apology, propose to my fellow-citizens and fellow-tutors, hoping that it will meet with a candid reception. It is true, I can boast no long or extensive experience in the business of education, but I have not been a mere spectator in this scene; which I hope may exempt me from the ridicule and contempt which have almost ever fallen upon the scheme of those persons who have written only from their closets, and without any experience, have rashly attempted to handle this subject, in which, of all others, experiments only ought to guide theory, upon which hardly any thing worth attending to can be advanced *a priori*; and where the

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greatest geniuses, for want of experience, have been the greatest visionaries, laying schemes the least capable of being reduced to practice, or the most absurd if they *had* been put in practice*.

Let it be remembered, that the difficulty under present consideration is, how to fill up with advantage those years which immediately precede a young gentleman's engaging in those higher spheres of active life in which he is destined to move. Within the departments of *active life*, I suppose to be comprehended all those stations in which a man's conduct will considerably affect the liberty and the property of his countrymen, and the riches, the strength and the security of his country: the first and most important ranks of which are filled by gentlemen of large property, who have themselves the greatest interest in the fate of their country, and who are within the influence of an honourable ambition to appear in the character of magistrates and legislators in the state, or of standing near the helm of affairs, and guiding the secret springs of government.

The profession of law, also, certainly comes within the above description of civil and active life, if a man hope to be any thing more than a practising attorney; the profession of arms too, if a gentleman have any expectation of arriving at the higher ranks of military preferment, and the business of merchandise, if we look beyond the servile drudgery of the warehouse or counting-house. Divines and physicians I consider to be interested in this subject, only as gentlemen and general scholars, or as persons who converse and have influence with gentlemen engaged in active life, without any particular view to their respective professions.

* Since this was written, which is near forty years ago, few persons have had more to do in the business of education than myself; and what I then planned in theory, has been carried into execution by myself and others, with, I believe, universal approbation.—*Amer. Ed.*

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That the parents and friends of young gentlemen destined to act in any of these important spheres, may not think a liberal education unnecessary to them, and that the young gentlemen themselves may enter with spirit into the enlarged views of their friends and tutors, I would humbly propose some new articles of academical instruction, such as have a nearer and more evident connexion with the business of active life, and which may therefore bid fairer to engage the attention, and rouse the thinking powers of young gentlemen of an active genius. The subjects I would recommend are CIVIL HISTORY, and more especially the important objects of CIVIL POLICY; such as the theory of laws, government, manufactures, commerce, naval force, &c., with whatever may be demonstrated from history to have contributed to the flourishing state of nations, to rendering a people happy and populous at home, and formidable abroad; together with those articles of previous information without which it is impossible to understand the nature, connexions, and mutual influences of those great objects.

To give a clearer idea of the subjects I would propose to the study of youth at places of public and liberal education, I have subjoined plans of three distinct courses of lectures, which, I apprehend, may be subservient to this design, divided into such portions as, experience has taught me, may be conveniently discussed in familiar lectures of an hour each *.

The first course is on the STUDY OF HISTORY in general, and in its most extensive sense. It will be seen to consist of such articles as tend to enable a young gentleman to read history with understanding, and to

* These *Syllabuses* are not now annexed to this *Essay*, as they were at its first publication. That relating to the *Lectures on History* will of course be contained in this work; and the publication of two others was rendered unnecessary for the reasons already given in the Preface.—*Amer. Ed.*

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reap the most valuable fruits of that engaging study. I shall not go over the particulars of the course in this place: let the syllabus speak for itself. Let it only be observed, that my view was, not merely to make history intelligible to persons who may choose to read it for their amusement, but principally to facilitate its subserviency to the highest uses to which it can be applied; to contribute to its forming the able statesman, and the intelligent and useful citizen. It is true that this is comprising a great deal more than the title of the course will suggest. But under the head of *Objects of attention to a reader of history*, it was found convenient to discuss the principal of those subjects which every gentleman of a liberal education is expected to understand, though they do not generally fall under any division of the sciences in a course of academical education: and yet, without a competent knowledge of these subjects, no person can be qualified to serve his country except in the lowest capacities.

This course of lectures, it is also presumed, will be found to contain a comprehensive system of that kind of knowledge which is peculiarly requisite to gentlemen who intend to *travel*. For, since the great object of attention to a reader of history, and to a gentleman upon his travels, are evidently the same, it must be of equal service to them both, to have their importance and mutual influences pointed out to them.

It will likewise be evident to any person who inspects this syllabus, that the subject of COMMERCE has by no means been overlooked. And it is hoped that when those gentlemen who are intended to serve themselves and their country in the respectable character of merchants, have heard the great maxims of commerce discussed in a scientifical and connected manner, as

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they deserve, they will not easily be influenced by notions adopted in a random and hasty manner, and from superficial views of things, whereby they might otherwise be induced to enter into measures seemingly gainful at present, but in the end prejudicial to their country, and to themselves and their posterity, as members of it.

The next course of lectures, the plan of which is briefly delineated, is upon the HISTORY OF ENGLAND, and is designed to be an exemplification of the manner of studying history recommended in the former course, in which the great uses of it are shown, and the actual progress of every important object of attention distinctly marked, from the earliest accounts of the island to the present time.

To make young gentlemen still more thoroughly acquainted with their own country, a third course of lectures (in connexion with the two others) is subjoined, viz. on its PRESENT CONSTITUTION AND LAWS. But the particular uses of these two courses of lectures need not be pointed out here, as they are sufficiently explained in the introductory addresses prefixed to each of them.

That an acquaintance with the subjects of these lectures is calculated to form the statesman, the military commander, the lawyer, the merchant, and the accomplished country gentleman, cannot be disputed. The principal objection that may be made to this scheme, is the introduction of these subjects into academies, and submitting them to the examination of youth, of the age at which they are usually sent to such places of education. It will be said by some, that these subjects are too deep and too intricate for their tender age and weak intellects; and that, after all, it can be no

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more than an outline of these great branches of knowledge that can be communicated to youth.

To prevent being misunderstood, let it be observed, that I would not propose that this course of studies should be entered upon by a young gentleman till he be sixteen or seventeen years of age, or at least, and only in some particular cases, fifteen years; at which time of life, it is well known to all persons concerned in the education of youth, that their faculties have attained a considerable degree of ripeness, and that, by proper address, they are as capable of entering into any subject of speculation as they ever will be. What is there in any of the subjects mentioned above which requires more acuteness or comprehension, than algebra, geometry, logic, or metaphysics; to which students are generally made to apply about the same age?

And if it be only an outline of political and commercial knowledge, &c. that can be acquired in the method I propose, let it be observed that it is nothing more than the rudiments of any science which can be taught in a place of education. The master of science is a character of which nothing more than the outline is ever drawn at an academy or the university. It is never finished but by assiduous and long-continued application afterwards. And supposing that only the first rudiments, the grand, plain and leading maxims of policy, with respect to arts, arms, commerce, &c., be communicated to a young gentleman, if they be such maxims as he is really destined to pursue in life, is it not better that he have some knowledge of them communicated early, and at a time when it is likely to make the deepest and most lasting impression, than to be thrown into the practice without any regular theory at all? It is freely acknowledged, that the man of business is not

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to be finished at an academy, any more than the man of science. This character is not the child of instruction and theory only; but, on the other hand, neither is it the mere offspring of practice without instruction. And certainly, if a knowledge of these subjects be of any use, the earlier they are attended to (after a person is capable of attending to them to any purpose), and the more regular is the method in which they are taught, the greater chance there is for their being thoroughly understood.

When subjects which have a connexion are explained in a regular system, every article is placed where the most light is reflected upon it from the neighbouring subjects. The plainest things are discussed in the first place, and are made to serve as axioms, and the foundation of those which are treated of afterwards. Without this regular method of studying the elements of any science, it seems impossible ever to gain a clear and comprehensive view of it. But after a regular institution, any particular part of a plan of instruction may be enlarged at any time with ease, and without confusion. With how much more ease and distinctness would a person be able to deliver himself upon any subject of policy or commerce, who had had every thing belonging to it explained to him in its proper connexion, than another person of equal abilities who should only have considered the subject in a random manner, reading any treatise that might happen to fall in his way, or adopting his maxims from the company he might accidentally keep, and, consequently, liable to be imposed upon by the interested views with which men very often both write and speak. For these are subjects on which almost every writer or speaker is to be suspected; so much has party and interest to do with every thing relating to them.

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Since, however, these subjects do enter into all sensible conversation, especially with gentlemen engaged in civil life, it is a circumstance extremely favourable to the study of them, that conversation will come greatly in aid of the lectures the young gentlemen hear upon them. It cannot fail to rouse their attention, and increase their application to their studies, when they hear the subjects of them discussed by their fathers and the elder part of their friends and acquaintance, for whose understanding and turn of thinking they have conceived a great esteem. They will listen with greater attention to grave and judicious persons, and become much more fond of their company, when they are able to understand their conversation, and to enter occasionally into it; when they can say that such a sentiment or fact was advanced in their lectures, and that one of their fellow-pupils or themselves made such a remark upon it. It is no wonder that many young gentlemen give but little attention to their present studies, when they find that the subjects of them are never discussed in any sensible conversation to which they are ever admitted. If studying these subjects only serve to give the generality of young gentlemen a taste for conversing upon them, and qualify them to appear to tolerable advantage in such conversations, the variety of lights in which they are viewed upon those occasions cannot fail to make them more generally understood; and the better these subjects are understood by the bulk of the nation, the more probable it is that the nation will be benefited by such knowledge.

If I were asked what branches of knowledge a young gentleman should in my judgement be master of before he can study this course with advantage, I would answer that a knowledge of the learned languages is not absolutely necessary, but is very desirable; especially

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such an insight into Latin as may enable a person to read the easier classics, and supersede the use of a dictionary, with respect to those more difficult English words which are derived from the Latin. The student of this course should understand French very well; he should also be a pretty good accountant, be acquainted with the more useful branches of practical mathematics; and, if possible, have some knowledge of algebra and geometry, which ought to be indispensable in every plan of liberal education.

Some will be ready to object to these studies, that a turn for speculation unfits men for business. I answer, that nothing is more true, if those speculations be foreign to their employment. It is readily acknowledged, that a turn for poetry and the belles lettres might hurt a tradesman; that the study of natural philosophy might interfere with the practice of the law, and metaphysics and the abstract sciences with the duty of a soldier. But it can never be said that a counsellor can be unfitted for his practice by a taste for the study of the law, or that a commander would be the worse soldier for studying books written on the art of war; nor can it be supposed that a merchant would do less business, or to worse purpose, for having acquired a fondness for such writers as have best explained the principles of trade and commerce, and for being qualified to read them with understanding and judgement.

It must be allowed, that the mechanical parts of any employment will be best performed by persons who have nó knowledge or idea of any thing beyond the mere practice. When a man's faculties are wholly employed upon one single thing, it is more probable that he will make himself completely master of it; and, having no further or higher views, he will more contentedly and more cheerfully give his whole time to

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his proper object. But no man who can afford the expense of a liberal education, enters upon any business with a view to spend his whole life in the mere mechanical part of it, and in performing a task imposed on him. A man of spirit will laudably aspire to be a master in his turn; when he must be directed by his own lights, and when he will find himself miserably bewildered, if he have acquired no more knowledge than was sufficient for him while he followed the direction of others. Besides, in the case of merchandise, if one branch fail, there is no resource but in more extensive knowledge. A man who has been used to go only in one beaten track, and who has had no idea given him of any other, for fear of his being tempted to leave it, will be wholly at a loss when it happens that that track can be no longer used; while a person who has a general idea of the whole course of the country may be able to strike out another and perhaps a better road than the former.

I am aware of a different kind of objection, from another quarter, which it behoves me not to overlook. The advocates for the old plan of education, and who dislike innovations in the number or the distribution of the sciences in which lectures are given, may object to the admission of these studies, as in danger of attracting the attention of those students who are designed for the learned professions, and thereby interfering too much with that which has been found, by the experience of generations, to be the best for scholars, the proper subjects of which are sufficient to fill up all their time, without these supernumerary articles. I answer, that the subjects of these lectures are by no means necessary articles of a mere scholastic education; but that they are such as scholars ought to have some acquaintance with, and that without some acquaintance

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with them, they must on many occasions appear to great disadvantage in the present state of knowledge.

Time was when scholars might with a good grace disclaim all pretensions to any branch of knowledge, but what was taught in the universities. Perhaps they would be the more revered by the vulgar on account of such ignorance, as an argument of their being more abstracted from the world. Few books were written but by critics and antiquaries for the use of men like themselves. The literati of those days had comparatively little free intercourse but among themselves; the learned world and the common world being much more distinct from one another than they are now. Scholars by profession read, wrote, and conversed in no language but the Roman. They would have been ashamed to have expressed themselves in bad Latin, but not in the least of being guilty of any impropriety in the use of their mother tongue, which they considered as belonging only to the vulgar.

But those times of revived antiquity have had their use, and are now no more. We are obliged to the learned labours of our forefathers for searching into all the remains of antiquity, and illustrating valuable ancient authors; but their maxims of life will not suit the world as it is at present. The politeness of the times has brought the learned and the unlearned into more familiar intercourse than they had before. They find themselves obliged to converse upon the same topics. The subjects of modern history, policy, arts, manufactures, commerce, &c., are the general topics of all sensible conversation. Every thing is said in our own tongue, little is even written in a foreign or dead language; and every British author is studious of writing with propriety in his native English. Criticism, which was formerly the great busi-

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ness of a scholar's life, is now become the amusement of a leisure hour, and this but to a few; so that a hundredth part of the time which was formerly given to criticism and antiquities, is enough in this age to gain a man the character of a profound scholar. The topics of sensible conversation are likewise the favourite subjects of all the capital writings of the present age, which are read with equal avidity by gentlemen, merchants, lawyers, physicians, and divines.

Now, when the course of reading, thinking, and conversation, even among scholars, is become so very different from what it was, is it not reasonable that the plan of even scholastic education should in some measure vary with it? The necessity of the thing has already in many instances forced a change, and the same increasing necessity will either force a greater and more general change, or we must not be surprised to find our schools, academies, and universities deserted, as wholly unfit to qualify men to appear with advantage in the present age.

In many private schools and academies, we find several things taught now, which were never made the subjects of systematical instruction in former times; and in those of our universities, in which it is the interest of the tutors to make their lectures of real use to their pupils, and where lectures are not mere matters of form; the professors find the necessity of delivering themselves in English. And the evident propriety of the thing must necessarily make this practice more general, notwithstanding the most superstitious regard to established customs.

But let the professors conduct themselves by what maxims they please, the students will of course be influenced by the taste of the company they keep in the world at large, to which young gentlemen in this age

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have an earlier admission than they had formerly. How can it be expected that the present set of students for divinity should apply to the study of the dead languages with the assiduity of their fathers and grandfathers, when they find so many of the uses of those languages no longer subsisting? What can they think it will avail them to make the purity of the Latin style their principal study, for several years of the most improveable part of their life, when they are sensible that they shall have little more occasion for it than other gentlemen, or than persons in common life, when they have left the university? And how can it be otherwise, but that their private reading and studies should sometimes be different from the course of their public instructions, when the favourite authors of the public, the merits of whom they hear discussed in every company, even by their tutors themselves, write upon quite different subjects?

In such a state of things, the advantage of a regular systematical instruction in those subjects, which are treated of in books that in fact engage the attention of all the world, the learned least of all excepted, and which enter into all conversations, where it is worth a man's while to bear a part, or to make a figure, cannot be doubted. And I am of opinion that these studies may be conducted in such a manner as will interfere very little with a sufficiently close application to others. Students in medicine and divinity may be admitted to these studies later than those for whose real use in life they are principally intended; not till they be sufficiently grounded in the classics, have studied logic, oratory, and criticism, or any thing else that may be deemed useful, previous to those studies which are peculiar to their respective professions; and even then,

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these new studies may be made a matter of amusement, rather than an article of business.

With respect to divines, it ought moreover to be considered, that the same revolutions in the state of knowledge, which call their attention to these new studies, have, in a great measure, furnished them with *time* for their application to them, by releasing them from several subjects, the study of which was formerly the great business of divines, and engrossed almost their whole time. And though new subjects have been started within the province of divinity, it does not appear to me that they require so much time and application as was usually given to those other studies, the use of which is now superseded. I mean principally school divinity, and the canon law; not to mention logic and metaphysics, which were formerly a more intricate business, and took up much more time than they do now.

Let a person but look over the table of contents to the works of Thomas Aquinas, which were read, studied, or commented upon, by all divines a few centuries ago; and he will be convinced that it must have required both more acuteness to comprehend the subjects of them, and more time to study and digest them in any tolerable manner, than it would require to become exceedingly well versed in all the branches of knowledge I would now recommend.

The canon law was not less complex than both the common and statute law of England; and every clergyman of eminence was under a necessity of understanding, not only the general principles and theory of that system, but even the minutiæ of the practice. Good sense and a free access to the scriptures have at length (assisted perhaps by an aversion to abstract speculations) thrown down the whole fabric of school divinity, and the

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rise of the civil above the ecclesiastical power in this realm has reduced the theory and practice of the English canon law within very narrow bounds. And as to the little that now remains in use, very few clergymen need trouble themselves about it*.

It is acknowledged that the attention of students in theology, and other learned professions, is much engaged by mathematical and philosophical studies which have been cultivated of late years. I rejoice in so valuable an accession to human science, and would be far from shortening the time that is given to them in places of liberal education. I rather wish there were more room for those studies in such places, and better provision for teaching them. But notwithstanding this, there is room enough for a small portion of time and attention to be given to the subjects I would here recommend; and it is not much of either that I would plead for, in the case of gentlemen intended for the learned professions.

The method in which those lectures may be taught to the most advantage, I apprehend to be the following; and experience has in some measure formed my judgement in this case.

Let the lecturer have a pretty full text before him, digested with care, containing not only a method of discoursing upon the subjects, but also all the principal *arguments* he adduces, and all the leading *facts* he makes use of to support his hypothesis. Let this text be the subject of a regular, but familiar discourse, not exceeding an hour at a time, with a class not exceeding twenty or thirty. Let the lecturer give his pupils all encouragement to enter occasionally into the con-

* In this country (America) a knowledge of the *canon law* cannot be said to be of any use, and that of the *civil law* of the Romans can only be interesting to curious and speculative persons, having no connexion with any laws in the United States.—*Amer. Edition.*

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versation, by proposing queries, or making any objections or remarks that may occur to them. Let all the students have an opportunity of perusing this text, if not of copying it, in the intervals between the lectures, and let near half of the time for lecturing be spent in receiving from the students a minute account of the particulars of the preceding lecture, and in explaining any difficulties they might have met with in it, in order that no subject be quitted till the tutor be morally certain that his pupils thoroughly understand it.

Upon every subject of importance, let the tutor make references to the principal authors who have treated of it; and if the subject be a controverted one, let him refer to books written on both sides of the question. Of these references let the tutor occasionally require an account, and sometimes a written abstract. Lastly, let the tutor select a proper number of the most important questions that can arise from the subject of the lectures, and let them be proposed to the students as exercises, to be treated in the form of orations, theses, or dissertations, as he shall think fit. Moreover, if he judge it convenient, let him appoint rewards to those who shall handle the subject in the most judicious manner.

Young gentlemen designed for the learned professions need not be put upon these exercises, or reading all the authors referred to. It may be sufficient for them to attend the lectures as they are delivered. And as I would not advise that the lectures be given with shorter intervals between them than three days, they cannot interfere much with their application to their proper studies.

I think I could assign very satisfactory reasons for each of the directions I have laid down above; but I

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flatter myself they will suggest themselves, if not upon the bare perusal, at least upon any attempt to reduce them to practice. I shall only take notice of an objection that may be made to one particular article in this method.

Some may object to the encouragement I would give the students to propose objections at the time of lecturing. This custom, they may say, will tend to interrupt the course of the lecture, and promote a spirit of impertinence and conceit in young persons. I answer, that every inconvenience of this kind may be obviated by the *manner* in which a tutor delivers himself in lecturing. A proper mixture of dignity and freedom (which are so far from being incompatible, that they mutually set off one another) will prevent, or repress, all impertinent and unseasonable remarks, at the same time that it will encourage those which are modest and pertinent.

But suppose a lecturer should not be able immediately to give a satisfactory answer to an objection that might be started by a sensible student. He must be conscious of his having made very ridiculous pretensions, and having given himself improper airs, if it give him any pain to tell his class that he will reconsider a subject, or even to acknowledge himself mistaken. It depends wholly upon a tutor's general disposition, and his usual manner of address, whether he lose or gain ground in the esteem of his pupils by such a declaration. Every tutor ought to have considered the subjects on which he gives lectures with attention, but no man can be expected to be infallible. For my own part, I would not forgo the pleasure and advantage which accrue both to my pupils and to myself, from this method, together with the opportunity it gives me of improving my lectures, by means of the

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many useful hints which are often started in this familiar way of discoursing upon a subject, for any inconvenience I have yet found to attend it, or that I can imagine may possibly attend it.

I cannot help flattering myself, that were the studies I have here recommended generally introduced into places of liberal education, the consequence might be happy for this country in some future period. Many of the political evils, under which this and every country in the world labour, are not owing to any want of a love for our country, but to an ignorance of its real constitution and interests. Besides, the very circumstance of giving that attention which I would recommend to its constitution and interests, would unavoidably beget a love and affection for them, and might perhaps contribute more to produce, propagate, and inflame a spirit of patriotism than any other circumstance. And certainly if there be the most distant prospect of this valuable end being gained by an application to these studies, it cannot fail to recommend them to every true lover of his country, in an age in which the minds of so many are blinded and misled by a spirit of faction; and, what is more alarming, when a taste for luxury and expense is so high, that there is reason to fear it may, in many cases, be superior to all other regards; and when in many breasts it already apparently threatens the utter extinction of a spirit of patriotism.

What was it that made the Greeks, the Romans in early ages, and other nations of antiquity, such obstinate patriots, that they had even no idea of any obligation superior to a regard for their country; but that the constant wars they were obliged to maintain with the neighbouring nations, kept the idea of their country perpetually in view, and always opposed to that of

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other nations? It is the same circumstance that gives our common soldiers and seamen more of the genuine spirit of patriotism than is felt by any other order of men in the community, notwithstanding they have the least interest in it. Now the course of instruction I would introduce, would bring the idea of our country more early into the minds of British youth, and habituate them to a constant and close attention to it. And why should not the practice of thinking, reading, conversing, and writing about the interest of our country, answer the same purpose with the moderns, that fighting for it did among the ancients?

It is a circumstance of particular consequence, that this enthusiastic love for our country would by this means be imbibed by persons of fortune, rank, and influence, in whom it might be effectual to the most important purposes; who might have it in their power, not only to wish well to their country, but to render it the greatest real services. Such men would not only, as is the case with private soldiers or seamen, be able to employ the force of a single arm in its defence, but might animate the hearts and engage the hands of thousands in its cause. Of what unspeakable advantage might be one minister of state, one military commander, or even a single member of parliament, who thoroughly understood the interests of his country, and who postponed every other interest and consideration to it!

This is not teaching politics to low mechanics and manufacturers, or encouraging the study of it among persons with whom it could be of no service to their country, and often a real detriment to themselves; though we may see in those persons, how possible it is for the public passions to swallow up all the private ones, when the objects of them are kept frequently in

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view, and are much dwelt upon in the mind. The same zeal that is the subject of ridicule in persons of no weight or influence in the state, would be most glorious and happy for their country in a more advantageous situation.

Some may perhaps object to these studies, as giving too much encouragement to that turn for politics which they may think is already immoderate in the lower and middle ranks of men among us. But must not political knowledge be communicated to those to whom it may be of real use, because a fondness for the study may extend beyond its proper bounds, and be caught by some persons who had better remain ignorant of it? Besides, it ought to be considered, that how ridiculous soever some may make themselves by pretensions to politics, a true friend of liberty will be cautious how he discourages a fondness for that kind of knowledge, which has ever been the favourite subject of writing and conversation in all free states. Only tyrants and the friends of arbitrary power have ever taken umbrage at a turn for political knowledge, and political discourses, among even the lowest of the people. Men will study and converse about what they are interested in, especially if they have any influence; and though the ass in the fable was in no concern who was his master, since he could but carry his usual load; and though the subjects of a despotic monarch need not trouble themselves about political disputes and intrigues, which never terminate in a change of measures, but only of men;—yet, in a free country, where even private persons have much at stake, every man is nearly interested in the conduct of his superiors, and cannot be an unconcerned spectator of what is transacted by them. With respect to influence, the sentiments of the lowest vulgar in England are not

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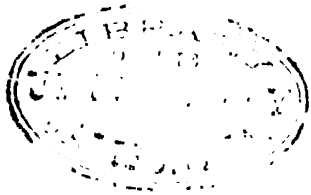
wholly insignificant, and a wise minister will ever pay some attention to them.

It is our wisdom, therefore, to provide that all persons who have any influence in political measures be well instructed in the great and leading principles of wise policy. This is certainly an object of the greatest importance. Inconveniences ever attend a general application to any kind of knowledge, and no doubt will attend this. But they are inconveniences which a friend to liberty need be under no apprehensions about*.

I may possibly promise myself too much, from the general introduction of the studies I have recommended in this Essay, into places of liberal education; but a little enthusiasm is always excusable in persons who propose and recommend useful innovations. I have endeavoured to represent the state of education in this view as clearly and as fully as I have been able; and I desire my proposals for emendations to have no more weight than the fairest representation will give them, in the minds of the cool and the unbiassed.

* What is said in this Essay to recommend the study of the principles of general policy to Englishmen, is much more applicable to Americans, as every individual has much more influence in public measures. In fact, the greatest attention is actually given to them by almost all persons in the United States. It is therefore the more necessary that they be well instructed in the true principles of government and general policy, that they may be the better qualified to give their votes on public occasions with real judgement, and without prejudice, to which members of free states are peculiarly liable; every competitor for power having an interest in biassing others in favour of himself and his peculiar principles.—*Amer. Edition.*



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LECTURE I.

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE study of History is more or less the employment of all persons of reading and education. This was, indeed, the earliest use that was made of letters. For the most ancient poems were almost entirely historical; and verse was first cultivated in preference to prose (which seems to be the most natural vehicle of history), as the best, because the most secure method of transmitting to posterity the knowledge of past events. In all ages the writing of history has employed the ablest men of all nations; and to this day hardly any writer enjoys a greater, a more extensive, and what will probably be a more lasting reputation, than a good historian.

The infinite variety there is in the subjects of history, makes it inviting to persons of every disposition. It may be either trifling or serious. It supplies materials with equal ease and equal copiousness, for the sallies of mirth, and the gravest disquisitions of philosophy. As every thing comes under the denomination of *history*, which informs us of any *fact* which is too remote in time or place to be the subject of our personal knowledge; it is calculated for the use of persons of both sexes, and of men of all ranks and of all professions in life. Because it cannot be presumed that a person of any profession, or in any situation, can, of himself, come at the knowledge of every fact which it is for his advantage to be acquainted with.

History is so connected with, and essential to, all kinds of knowledge, that the most superficial essay

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upon any subject whatever is hardly tolerable, unless some kind of historical facts be introduced or alluded to in it. The necessity of facts to moral writers, or those who write upon the theory of human nature, I need not mention. And certainly no person can be a good divine, much less undertake any part of the controversy with unbelievers, unless he be very well acquainted with history, civil as well as ecclesiastical. Indeed, more than half of the books of scripture consist of history. And as all the prophecies of the Old and New Testament must be verified by history, none but a good historian can be a judicious commentator upon such important parts of the sacred writings.

Besides, an acquaintance with history is agreeable to us as sociable and conversable creatures; since it may be considered as a means of extending the power of conversation, and making the dead equally of the party with the living. Nay, as things are circumstanced, the dead contribute more largely to gratify our natural and eager curiosity to be informed of past and remote transactions.

In this field of history, therefore, which is open to every man of letters, and in which every man of taste and curiosity cannot fail to pass a great part of his leisure hours, it cannot but be desirable to have a guide (at least upon a person's first introduction into it), lest he should lose himself in the boundless variety it affords, and not be able to find those convenient eminences from which he will have the most easy and agreeable view of the objects it contains. In the character of this guide, Gentlemen, I now offer you my best assistance.

The course of lectures we are now entering upon is intended to facilitate the study of history, both by directing you to the easiest methods of *acquiring* and

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retaining the knowledge of it, and making the proper *use* of it when you are possessed of it.

That the observations I have collected for this purpose may be the most intelligible and useful, I shall dispose of them in the following method: considering,

I. The general uses of history.

II. The sources of history.

III. What is necessary or useful to be known previous to the study of history.

IV. Directions for the more easy acquiring and retaining a knowledge of history.

V. Proper objects of attention to an historian. And under this head I shall consider the several subjects of *general policy*, or the circumstances that chiefly contribute to render civil societies secure, numerous, and happy, as being the most important of all objects of attention to readers of history.

VI. In the last place I would give you a general view of history civil and ecclesiastical, but shall content myself with referring to Holberg*, or some other epitome of general history.

PART I.

ACCORDING to the method above laid down, I am first to consider the general *uses* of history. These may be exhibited under three heads. 1. History serves to amuse the imagination, and interest the passions in general. 2. It improves the understanding. And 3. It tends to strengthen the sentiments of virtue.

* "Introduction to Universal History, from the *Latin* of Baron Holberg, with notes, by Gregory Sharp." 8vo, 1755.—*Ed.*

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The first and lowest use of history, is that it agreeably amuses the imagination, and interests the passions. With these charms history captivates the generality of readers; and though I shall chiefly recommend it in another and an higher view, I think this is an advantage of history which is by no means inconsiderable, and by which a reader, of the severest philosophy, need not be ashamed to acknowledge himself influenced. To amuse the imagination, and give play to the passions in general, is almost the only and avowed scope of all works of *fiction*, both in prose and verse; and men of great genius and abilities are not thought to have thrown away their time to no purpose upon them. Whatever *exercises*, does likewise *improve* and invigorate our faculties, and dispose them for the more free and perfect discharge of their proper functions. Admitting, therefore, that the histories of Alexander the Great, of Charles XII. of Sweden, or the conquest of Mexico, be read with no other view than the adventures of Telemachus, of Amadis de Gaul, or the conquest of Jerusalem; or that the voyages of Dampier, Sir Francis Drake, and Captain Cooke, be put upon the same footing with those of Gulliver; I would not say the time spent in reading them was wholly lost. Whatever valuable impressions are made upon the mind by fictitious adventures, the same, in kind, though perhaps, generally, not equal in degree, are made by real adventures; and *facts*, with whatever view and in whatever manner treasured up in the mind, are ready to be applied to any further and higher uses that they are capable of, whenever the person who is possessed of them is disposed to view them in any other light.

In this view all true history has a capital advantage over every work of fiction. Works of fiction are not

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in their nature capable, in general, of any other uses than the authors of them had in view, which must necessarily be very limited; whereas true history, being an exhibition of the conduct of divine Providence, in which every thing has, perhaps, infinite relations and uses, is an inexhaustible mine of the most valuable knowledge. Works of fiction resemble those machines which we contrive to illustrate the principles of philosophy, such as globes and orreries, the uses of which extend no further than the views of human ingenuity; whereas real history resembles the experiments made by the air pump, the condensing engine, or electrical machine, which exhibit the operations of nature, and the God of nature himself, whose works are the noblest subject of contemplation to the human mind, and are the ground-work and materials of the most extensive and useful theories.

But, independent of any further use, we have many well written histories, which, I think, are calculated to give as much pure entertainment, especially to a person of a reasonable age and experience, as the generality of novels and romances. Let a person of taste and just sentiment read the history of the life of Cicero written by Middleton, the conquest of Mexico, or the voyage of Commodore Anson, or even such larger works as the histories of Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Philip de Comines, &c. and then judge. If the amazing and interesting scenes of fiction be worked up with more art, be more happily disposed to excite and interest the passions, and be more agreeably diversified with proper episodes, the very thought that it is *fiction* (the influence of which grows with our years) makes that artful disposition and those embellishments necessary: whereas the mere thought that we are listening to the voice of *truth* is able to keep the attention

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awake through many a dry and ill digested narrative of *facts*.

The next and higher use of history is to improve the understanding and strengthen the judgement, and thereby fit us for entering upon life with advantage. "By contemplating the vast variety of particular characters and events;" as Lord Bolingbroke well observes, "by examining the strange combinations of causes different, remote, and seemingly opposite, that often concur in producing one effect;—a man of parts may improve the study of history to its proper and principal use; he may sharpen the penetration, fix the attention of his mind, and strengthen his judgement; he may acquire the faculty and the habit of discerning quicker, and looking further; and of exerting that flexibility and steadiness, which are necessary to be joined in the conduct of all affairs that depend on the concurrence or opposition of other men*." Judgement, as well as our other powers, must improve by exercise. Now history presents us with the same objects which we meet with in the business of life. They must consequently excite the same kind of reflections, and give the same exercise to our thoughts, and thus produce the same turn of mind. History, therefore, may be called anticipated experience. By this means we begin our acquaintance with mankind sooner, and bring into the world, and the business of it, such a cast of thought and temper of mind, as is acquired by passing through it; which will make us appear to more advantage in it, and not such mere novices upon our introduction into it, as we should otherwise be. As Lord Bolingbroke again observes; "There are certain general principles; and rules of life and conduct, which always must be true, because they are conform-

* *Letter* iii. "On the study and use of History." 8vo, 1752. p. 54.—*Ed.*

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able to the invariable nature of things. He who studies history as he would study philosophy, will soon distinguish and collect them; and by doing so, will soon form to himself a general system of ethics and politics on the surest foundations, on the trial of these principles and rules in all ages, and on the confirmation of them by universal experience *."

The impressions which this anticipated knowledge of the world makes upon us, it is certain, will not be so deep as those which are the result of our own personal acquaintance with it; and our judgement of things, and maxims of conduct, formed in this manner, will not be so firmly riveted in our minds. But then they will have the advantage of being more correct, and of being a better guide to us, than any thing we could have learned from our own random experience upon our entering the world. The reason is, that the examples which history presents to us are generally *complete*. The whole is before us. We see men and things at their full length, as we may say; and we likewise generally see them through a medium which is less partial than that of experience. Whereas in real life every scene opens very slowly; we see therefore but a very small part of a thing at one time, and are consequently liable to be deceived into a very fallacious judgement of it; particularly considering how distorted even those imperfect views of things are by the relation of every thing to *self*, which it is impossible to keep out of sight in things in which we ourselves are concerned.

In this view, history is generally the only faithful instructor of princes, particularly absolute princes. It is so much the interest of abler men than themselves

* *Letter* iii. p. 53.—*Ed.*

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to impose upon them, and to swell their ideas of their own importance, that, without the aid of history, it is almost impossible they should ever form any just notion of men or things at all. But in history, princes may see their predecessors treated without flattery or ceremony; and therefore, by the help of common sense, they may see, as in a glass, in what light their own characters and conduct will appear to posterity. Nay, they may depend upon it, that some historians will rate them as much too low, as their contemporaries have rated them too high. Of what avail have been the fulsome flatteries of Velleius Paterculus, to the character of Tiberius, or his favourite Sejanus; or even the refined praises of Virgil and Horace, to the character of Augustus himself? Posterity at length sees their real characters, through all their artful disguises, and only thinks the worse of men for laying persons of wit and ingenuity under a necessity of acting a part so unworthy of themselves. All future kings of France may see many very free censures upon the character and conduct of their predecessor Louis XIV. in Voltaire*, notwithstanding the writer cannot conceal his partiality for his hero and his nation.

But, indeed, to men in all stations, instructions for their own conduct may be conveyed in the clearest and most cogent manner through the example of others. Suetonius relates that Augustus used to transcribe instructive passages of historians, and send them to those of his officers who had need of admonition†.

* See, among other examples, his remarks on the revocation, in 1685, of the Edict of Nantz; *Siècle de Louis XIV.* Ch. 36.—*Ed.*

† "In evolvendis utriusque linguæ auctoribus, nihil æque sectabatur quam præcepta et exempla publice vel privatim salubria: eaque ad verbum excerpta, aut ad domesticos, aut ad exercituum provinciarumque rectores, aut ad urbis magistratus plerumque, mittebat: prout quique monitione indigerent." Sect. 89.—*Ed.*

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We may easily be sensible of the importance of history to the advancement of knowledge in general, as well as of political knowledge in particular, if we consider that the most exalted understanding is nothing more than a power of drawing conclusions, and forming maxims of conduct, from known *facts* and *experiments*, of which necessary *materials of knowledge* the mind itself is wholly barren. How then can knowledge be gained without experience? And very scanty and dear bought would be the wisdom that was the result of the experience of one man, or of one age only. How slow then must have been the progress that mankind would have made in wisdom, and in improvements of all kinds, before, by some means or other, one age could be made acquainted with the observations of their ancestors.

It was requisite, therefore, in order to the improvement of human kind and of human conduct, and to give mankind clear and comprehensive views of their interest, together with the means of promoting it, that the experience of some ages should be collected and compared, that distant events should be brought together; and so the first rise, entire progress, and final conclusion of schemes, transactions, and characters, should be seen, as it were, in one unbroken view, with all their connexions and relations. Without this, no adequate judgement could be formed of them, such as would enable an intelligent person to determine how far the same or the like undertakings would bear to be repeated or amended. Without these advantages, therefore, the improvements of human life, notwithstanding the greatest perfection and extent of our intellectual powers, would be at a stand. There might be conjecture and enterprise, but there could be no certainty, or rational expectation of success.

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Consequently, without history, the advantages of our rational nature must have been rated very low; and the more complete, the more exact and comprehensive is our furniture of historical facts, the more materials of knowledge, and consequently of *power* and *happiness*, are we possessed of. For Lord Bacon has justly remarked, that "knowledge is power;" and certainly all the excellence of human nature, all the advantage we have above the brutes, is derived from the use of our intellectual powers. Since, with respect to the powers of body, and an instinctive capacity of defending and providing for themselves, they have greatly the advantage of us.

Political knowledge, it will be said, is useful only to politicians and ministers of state. But besides that, it is a matter of reasonable curiosity to examine into the springs of the great wheel of government, on the just balance and regular motions of which our temporal security and happiness depend; and though political affairs be almost wholly, but not entirely, out of the sphere of private persons under an *arbitrary* government; yet "in *free* governments," as it is admirably said by Lord Bolingbroke, "The public service is not confined to those whom the prince appoints to different posts in the administration under him.—It can never be impertinent nor ridiculous therefore, in such a country, for men of all degrees to instruct themselves in those affairs wherein they may be actors, or judges of those that act, or controllers of those that judge*;" and from some one or other of these classes no subject of Great Britain is wholly excluded.

It is not unworthy of our notice, when we consider in what respects the knowledge of history improves the understanding, that it tends to free the mind from many

* Letter V. p. 156.—*Ed.*

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foolish prejudices, particularly an unreasonable partiality for our own country, merely as our own country, which makes a people truly ridiculous in the eyes of foreigners. It was a want of acquaintance with history that made the Chinese mandarines express their astonishment to find their country make so small a figure in a map of the world which the Jesuits showed them. And through the same ignorance, the Samoiedes, a people inhabiting the northern parts of Siberia, whom Le Bruyn describes as the lowest and worst provided for of all the human race, wondered that the czar of Muscovy did not choose to live among them.

National prejudices likewise produce a most unreasonable aversion to foreign nations and foreign religions, which nothing but an acquaintance with history can cure. The misfortune is, that it is too often the interest of particular persons and parties, to promote those prejudices. The Moors of Africa were surprised to find their first Christian captives in the shape of men; and our very signs do to this day bear the traces of the extravagant opinion of the size and the strength of the Saracens, which they who returned from the crusades propagated among their ignorant countrymen *.

The knowledge of history operates no less favourably and effectually, in removing the prejudices that may have been entertained in favour of ancient or modern times, by giving a just idea of the advantages and disadvantages of mankind in all ages.

Far am I, however, from imagining that the consequence of studying history will be an indifference to our own country. On the contrary, I think it one of the greatest advantages arising from the study of history, to an inhabitant of Great Britain, that he will

* In England the *Saracen's Head* is a common sign at inns, and it is always drawn to appear exceedingly large and fierce.—*Amer. Edition.*

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generally lay down his book more thoroughly satisfied with his own situation; and will be, from rational conviction, and not from blind prejudice, a more zealous friend to the interest of his country than before*.

Indeed, so apparent are the superior advantages of our constitution and laws, if not of our manners and customs, over those of most other nations, that there are few foreigners who do not give ours the preference to their own. Montesquieu, one of the first of philosophical politicians,—that is, those who have treated of laws and government with a just regard to the principles of human nature, and the situation and wants of mankind,—is in raptures, and almost quits the style of philosophy, whenever he treats of our constitution †. And Voltaire, who is exceedingly partial to the power and glory of France, cannot help doing the same justice to the superior excellence of our government ‡. Indeed, as a man of a free and bold turn of thinking, you will be sensible that he could not have done otherwise, when we come to analyse the British constitution, and to show from what its excellence results §; though at the same time I shall

* This is much more true of an American citizen, especially as he cannot but have a higher sense of his own influence and importance.—*Amer. Edition.*

† See his chapter on the English Government, especially the conclusion: *De L'Esprit des Loix*, liv. xi. ch. 6: where, speaking of Harrington's *Oceana*, he adds, "qu'il a bâti Chalcédoine ayant le rivage de Byzance devant les yeux."—*Ed.*

‡ In *La Henriade*, on introducing his hero to the court of Elizabeth, the poet thus describes the English government:

"Aux murs de Westminster on voit paraitre ensemble
Trois pouvoirs étonnés du nœud qui les rassemble,
Les députés du peuple, et les grands, et le roi,
Divisés d'intérêt, réunis par la loi;
Tous trois, membres sacrés de ce corps invincible,
Dangereux à lui-même, à ses voisins terrible." Chant i.—*Ed.*

§ At the time [1788] that this was written, the English Constitution was unquestionably the best, the most favourable to public liberty, and to private security and happiness, of any in the world. But late events have shown the

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not fail to point out some radical and very considerable defects in it*.

Under the head of *prejudices* I shall just mention a pleasant but not unimportant observation of Mr. Hume, viz. that the *fair sex* " may learn from history,—that *love* is not the only passion that governs the male world†;" which from the reading of novels, frequenting the theatre, and even the general turn of polite conversation, they might otherwise imagine.

But the capital advantage we derive from history under this head is, that from this source only can be derived all future improvements in the science of *government*. And if the well-being of society be our object, this is, after all, the most important of all sciences. For certainly more substantial benefit results to society from the proper balance of the several powers of a state, or even from one wise law respecting the liberties and properties of men, than could be derived from all the other sciences put together. I except, however, the sciences, if they may be so called, of morality and religion.

Human nature, with the various interests and connexions of men in a state of society, is so complex a subject, that nothing can be safely concluded *a priori* with respect to it. Every thing that we can depend upon must be derived from *facts*. All the plans of

great abuses to which it is liable, and the friends of genuine liberty have been great sufferers in consequence of it. Such a turn has the administration of that country taken, that every zealous friend of liberty and reformation has either been an actual sufferer, or exposed to the greatest danger. Some out of them have found it necessary to leave the country, and others have been obliged to keep the most cautious silence; the liberty of the press having been under as much restraint, as ever it was in France, on all political subjects.—*Amer. Edition.*

* This refers to a course of lectures, which I do not publish, but of which a *Syllabus* may be seen in my *Essay on Education.*

† "Of the Study of History." *Essays*, 1742. p. 69. In his later editions Mr. Hume omitted this essay.—*Ed.*

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government laid down by the wisest of the ancients, as Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, are, without exception, defective in many capital instances; and notwithstanding the further lights that More and Harrington* might have derived from the history of many centuries after them, neither the *Utopia* of the former, nor the *Oceana* of the latter, would bear to be reduced to practice. The former is visionary even to a proverb.

This grand science is still in its infancy. Men of the greatest reflection and experience could not pretend to pronounce, with any degree of certainty, what, for instance, would be the consequence of any considerable change in our own constitution and government, or that of other nations. And do we not frequently see that our ablest ministers of state, who give the closest attention to the internal policy of the kingdom, are obliged to change their measures, in consequence of being disappointed in their expectations from them. This makes it so extremely hazardous to introduce any material change into an established form of government. No human sagacity can foresee what inconvenience might arise from it †.

So important is this science of government, that nothing can be more worthy of the study of those who have sufficient abilities, and who are friends of mankind; and the only foundation on which men who think, and who are not carried away by their own imaginations, will build any conclusions, is *historical facts*. Hypo-

* To whom may be added Neville, his friend and perhaps his coadjutor. See "Some account of Henry Neville," prefixed to his *Plato Redivivus*, 1763.—*Ed.*

† This observation, made forty years ago, has been abundantly verified in the history of the late revolutions in France. Though planned by men of the greatest abilities, and the most extensive reading and experience, they have had consequences that were little foreseen; and the system established at present (A. D. 1803) is the very reverse of every thing that was intended at the commencement of the revolution.—*Amer. Edition.*

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theses built upon arguments *a priori* are least of all tolerable. Here observation and experience are the only safe guides.

As all other sciences have made very rapid advances in the present age, the science of government bids fair to keep pace with them. Many ingenious men have of late turned their thoughts to this subject, and valuable treatises upon it have been published both in this country and abroad. But what is of much more value, we have now a vast stock of important *facts* before us, for our contemplation. The old governments of Europe are arrived to a considerable degree of maturity. We may rather say they are growing into decay; so that their several advantages and defects are become sufficiently conspicuous, and the new governments in North America, and especially those of France and Poland, are so many *new experiments* *, of which political philosophers cannot fail to make the greatest use. Time has also weakened and removed many prejudices in favour of pretended *rights to power* and peculiar *modes of government;* so that the only proper object of government, *the happiness of the people*†, is now almost universally seen and alone attended to.

For want of acquaintance with history, we are apt to pronounce *a priori* many things to be impossible, which in fact really exist, and are very safe. Thus the king of Siam could not be made to believe that the Venetians had no king, any more than that water could

* The rapidly increasing success of the *experiment* in North America, since this passage was written, and the now encouraging prospect of South American independence, will here occur to every reader.—*Ed.*

† Or, as the author elsewhere expresses it, "the good and happiness of the members,—that is, the majority of the members of any state,—is the great standard by which every thing relating to that state must finally be determined." See his *Essay on the first Principles of Government.* Sect. ii. *Works,* xxii. 13.—*Ed.*

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have the hardness of stone, and bear men and carriages.

I shall conclude this head with adding, that the knowledge of history contributes to enlarge the mind by the acquaintance we are thereby enabled to form with all those objects which, in the course of these lectures, will be pointed out as worthy of peculiar attention to an historian, the knowledge of which is equally useful for speculative or practical purposes; so that philosophers and politicians may equally avail themselves of it.

LECTURE II.

THE third use of history is, that it tends to strengthen the sentiments of virtue. That this is the tendency of an acquaintance with history will be evident, if we consider in what manner virtuous impressions are actually made upon the mind. How do we acquire a love for virtue; but by frequently viewing it in those points of light in which it appears *desirable* to us, and in a situation of mind in which no bias is laid upon us in favour of vice?

It cannot be denied by any who maintain that virtue is its own sufficient reward in this life, that even a just and well-conducted knowledge of the world would have this happy effect. It is only a partial acquaintance with it, seeing things in an unfair point of light, and with minds prejudiced by prospects of pleasure, interest, or false notions of honour, that prevents that happy consequence from taking place universally. Now, to study history, is to come at the knowledge of the world in the most favourable circumstances. Historians are the best guides and tutors we can take

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with us in our travels. They show us *the whole* of transactions and characters, before a partial view of them can have had time to make unfavourable impressions on our minds; and all the reflections they make upon men and things are uniformly dictated by a sense of virtue and honour. Even Machiavel himself, though his very name conveys the idea of baseness and villainy as a politician*, "discovers," as Mr. Hume observes, "a true sentiment of virtue in his history of Florence †."

In such company, and in the hands of such able and faithful conductors, what reason have we to be alarmed to see our friends introduced to a knowledge of mankind? There is certainly a great difference between a person's being admitted to see the figure which Alexander the Great, or Charles XII. made at the head of their conquests, to view the court of Dionysius, of Nero, or of Louis XIV. in all their splendour, and seeing the figure their whole lives make in the annals of history. In the former situation the incautious mind of a young man might be in danger of being captivated with the charms of ambition, voluptuousness, or magnificence; but looking upon the same objects from the more advantageous situation in which history places us, we must certainly be equally struck with their vanity and folly, and conceive a disgust and aversion to them. It is with the knowledge of the world, as Pope says it is with learning:

> There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
> And drinking largely sobers us again.

The only reason why a young person cannot be safely

* It has, however, been maintained with some plausibility, that Machiavel, in his *Prince*, designs ironically to expose the base policy which he appears to recommend. See also his own *Vindication*, in *Pillars of Priestcraft*, &c. iv 276.—*Ed.*

† *Essays*, 1742. p. 76.—*Ed.*

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trusted with viewing the vices, as well as the virtues, that are in the world, is, that if left to himself in real life, vice may be so circumstanced, as to be but too inviting to his inexperienced mind; but in history, vice never appears tempting. Indeed, whatever be the disposition of historians themselves, if they give a faithful view of things as they have really come to pass, they cannot help giving a representation favourable to virtue. So consistent is the order of Divine Providence, that if the scheme be fairly and completely represented, we may depend upon it that nothing will be exhibited from which it may be justly concluded that vice is eligible upon the whole. Contrary, therefore, to what may be apprehended from a promiscuous acquaintance with the world through the glass of history, vices may be viewed as safely as virtues. Nay, they both equally teach wisdom and good morals. It is even impossible to say which of them inculcates the important lesson with more force. The excesses of a Nero, and the goodness of a Marcus Aurelius, have the same good effect in history.

Thus it appears, by arguing as it were *a priori*, from the lights in which characters and events are seen in history, that it *must* have an effect that is favourable to virtue. I shall now demonstrate the same thing more particularly, by showing what scenes history actually exhibits that have this happy tendency.

In the first place, history, by displaying the sentiments and conduct of truly great men, and those of a contrary character, tends to inspire us with a taste for solid glory and real greatness; and convinces us that it does not consist in what the generality of mankind are so eager in the pursuit of.

We can never imagine, if we derive our instruction from history, that true greatness consists in *riches*;

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when we see that some of the most distinguished characters in the annals of mankind, were formed, and lived in poverty, men, who showed their contempt of riches by refusing to improve the opportunities they had of amassing wealth. Not to mention Cincinnatus, Fabricius, and other Romans, in the early ages of that city, honoured for their poverty, but who had no opportunity of acquiring what we should call riches. Scipio Æmilianus, who might have engrossed almost all the wealth of Carthage, never made a single acquisition in all his life *. The great Philopœmen generally went in a very plain dress, and without any servant or attendants. The emperors Nerva, Trajan, Antoninus, and Aurelius, sold their palaces, their gold and silver plate, their valuable furniture, and all the superfluities they could dispense with, which their predecessors had heaped up, and banished all expenses and delicacies from their tables with the greatest severity.

These princes, together with Vespasian, Pertinax, Alexander Severus, Claudius the second, and Tacitus, who were raised to the empire by their merit, and whom all ages have admired as the greatest and the best of princes, were ever fond of the greatest plainness in their apparel, furniture, and outward appearance. The ruins of Adrian's country seat † are still to be seen, and it does not appear to have exceeded the bigness of one of our common houses. Even Augustus himself, during a reign of near fifty years, never changed his apartment or furniture ‡. We see the

* His property left to his heir consisted of only "thirty-two pounds weight of silver, and two pounds and a half of gold." *A. U. Hist.* 1747. xii. 420. —*Ed.*

† Which had been Cicero's villa, near Puteoli. See *Middleton*, iii. 297.—*Ed.*

‡ "Per annos amplius quadraginta," says Suetonius, "eodem cubiculo hieme et æstate mansit." Sect. 72.—*Ed.*

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same just turn of thinking in the famous Cornelia, daughter of the great Scipio. When a lady of her acquaintance desired very importunately to see her toilet, she deferred satisfying her curiosity till her children, who were the famous Gracchi, came from school, and then only said, "*En! hæc ornamenta mea sunt.*" (*These are my ornaments!*)

When temperance, frugality, and a just sense of greatness are graced with such names as these I have mentioned, shall we be in any danger of abandoning ourselves to excess in imitation of the infamous Nero, whose golden palace, Herodian says, was as large as all the rest of the city of Rome*, and whose extravagance in other respects was in proportion to it; of Caligula, of the mad Commodus, or the beastly Heliogabalus? Do we admire Lucullus the more for the idea that Cicero† gives us of his expensive table? Or can we think Marc Antony to be commended for having a succession of grand entertainments always ready, that whenever he was disposed to eat he might never wait half an hour?

Can we think that *honours* and *preferment* constitute true greatness, when we see in history that the most worthy men have generally declined them? Tacitus and Probus, who did so much honour to their stations, were both advanced to the empire against their inclinations; and in how much fairer a point of light do their characters stand than that of those sons of ambition, who waded through seas of blood to come at it?

The extravagancies of Alexander the Great, in killing his best friends, the cruelties of the Spaniards in

* See *A. U. Hist.* xiv. 415.—*Ed.*

† Here is probably a misnomer, from the author's having recollected the story, and not the authority. It is Plutarch who, *in Lucull.*, describes Cicero and Pompey as surprised by a luxurious supper in the Apollo.—*Ed.*

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America, the ruin of Sweden, by Charles XII. are certainly more proper to show the folly and madness of unbounded ambition, than their victories are to dazzle our minds with their glare. How we regret that unhappy turn of mind, when we consider what valuable members of society their abilities would have rendered such men as Julius Cæsar and Pompey, had they jointly employed them to raise the glory of their country; and that the expenses of Louis XIV. in preparations for destruction, were more than sufficient to have founded many numerous colonies, and to have put them into a flourishing condition.

Nothing so effectually cures a man of the absurd pride of *birth* and *family*, as seeing some of the greatest men in history, such as Tamerlane, cardinal Ximenes, and pope Sixtus the fifth, rise from low beginnings; and we are always charmed to see truly great men, who were possessed of the advantages of birth, wave all pretences to merit on that account. Even Vespasian laughed at those who pretended to derive his descent from Hercules.

An excessive passion for *fame* as an end of action, reduces a man very low in the light of history. How much does the letter which Cicero wrote to Lucceius, and which unfortunately for him yet remains, (in which he almost insists upon his praising him at the expense of truth, in the history of his consulship*,) sink that great man in our esteem. On the contrary, how prodigiously does the character of Cato rise upon us by a few words of Sallust†, *Esse, quam videri, bonus ma-*

* "Itaque te plane etiam atque etiam rogo ut et ornes ea vehementius etiam quam fortasse sentis, et in eo leges historiæ negligas." Cicero even entreats his friend "amori plusculum etiam quam concedit veritas largiare." *Epist. ad Fam.* v. 12. See *Middleton*, ii. 68. *Melmoth*, Book i. 20. —*Ed.*

† In a comparison between Cato and Cæsar. *Bell. Catilin.*—*Ed.*

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lebat, (*He rather chose to* BE, *than to* SEEM, *good*). And the vanity of Nero upon his excelling in music, and of Commodus on his dexterity in killing wild beasts, completely expose the affectation of excelling in what is out of our proper sphere. The same maxim is conveyed by Philip, when he asked his son Alexander, if he was not ashamed to play on a musical instrument so well as he did?

In how different a light do those men appear in history, who are greedy to engross all praise to themselves, and those who contribute heartily to the reputation of others? An instance of the former, we see in Claudius, who made an idle expedition to finish the conquest of Britain; of the latter, in M. Aurelius, who denied himself the pleasure of attending his sister Lucilla (whom he had married to L. Verus,) into the East, lest his presence should give a check to the growing reputation of his son-in-law, and seem to draw upon himself the honour of putting an end to an important war, to the other's prejudice. And history does the most ample recompence to those who have generously sacrificed their own reputation to the public good. Thus Fabius Maximus, to his immortal honour, notwithstanding the provoking insults he received from Minucius, rescued him from the hands of Hannibal, setting aside his *resentment*, and consulting only his zeal for the interest of his country.

We conceive more clearly what true greatness of mind is, at the same time that our hearts are more filled with admiration of it, and burn with a stronger passion for it, by a simple narration of some incidents in history, than by the most elaborate and philosophically exact description of it. What can give us a clearer idea of the noble sentiments of strict honour and integrity, than marshal Turenne's refusing a sum of mo-

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ney, which was offered him if he would not march his army through a certain territory, because he had not intended to march that way*. Does not every person's heart strongly feel the sentiments of benevolence, when he hears the good Titus exclaiming that he had *lost a day*, because he had done no person a good office in it? If a person be capable of forming any idea of greatness of mind in forgiving injuries, he will do it from hearing the following reply that Louis XII. made to a courtier who pressed him to punish a person who had offended him before he came to the throne: "It belongs not to the king of France to revenge the injuries offered to the duke of Orleans." Or, lastly, what can give so just an idea of the true spirit and magnanimity of a soldier, as the reply that viscount Dorée made to Charles IX. of France, when he received an order from him to massacre the Hugonots, "I desire your majesty would employ me in what is *possible*†."

The last example leads me to a second observation, which is, that history enables us to form just ideas of the dignity and the weakness of human nature, both of which are extremely useful to us in life. The one inspires us with the noble ambition of rising above the level of our species; and the other view, without destroying, tempers that ambition with no more than a

* "Comme votre ville n'est point sur la *route* où j'ai résolu de faire marcher l'armée, je ne puis pas en conscience prendre l'argent que vous m'offrez." See also his answer to a general officer who advised him to appropriate a large treasure of which his government would know nothing. *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1789. ix. 216.—*Ed.*

† "Montmorin governor of Auvergne replied, I have too much respect for your majesty not to believe the letter as counterfeited; but if (what God forbid!) the order is truly yours, I have too much respect for your majesty to obey it." See *An Essay upon the Civil Wars of France*, by Voltaire. 1728. p. 18. This Essay was written by Voltaire in English, and published by himself in London. See also *La Henriade*. 1810. p. xxxvii.—*Ed.*

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due degree of humility and diffidence; which in fact equally contributes to the same end. What I mean will be more clearly understood by a few examples.

How can we conceive a more just or a more exalted idea of a sense of true honour and heroism, than by reading such stories as that of the behaviour of the earl of Peterborough at the famous siege of Barcelona? While he was settling the terms of capitulation with the Spanish commander, news was brought that, contrary to the suspension of arms agreed upon between them, a party of the allied troops had broke into the town. The earl told the Spanish general, that if he would give him leave to enter the town with his English troops, he would drive out his allies, and then return to finish the capitulation, which he actually performed.

I shall say nothing of the fabulous story of Curtius, who is said to have leaped into a gulf, or of Codrus, who procured his own death to save his country, since instances of equal courage in braving death are by no means uncommon in our own times. At the siege of Turin one Mica is said to have fired a mine, and purposely destroyed himself with the enemy. And how many commanders of ships have purposely blown them up rather than strike their colours. These, it may be said, are the effects of a refined sense of honour, which is acquired in a highly improved state of society. But we may see what may be called the native strength of the mind, in the North American Indians, with whom, when prisoners, it is very common to refuse dying by their own hands, on purpose to show the honour of their country, in supporting the tortures which they know are prepared for them*.

Facts like these, together with those which show

* See Burke, *On the Manners of the Americans.* Ch. iv. *European Settlements.* 1757. i. 189.—*Ed.*

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the extent of genius in such men as Aristotle, Archimedes, and sir Isaac Newton, give us high ideas of the dignity of human nature, and the capacity of the human mind. But the other side of the picture, which history with equal faithfulness presents to us, gives us a most affecting and equally instructive view of our deplorable weakness and frailty, exemplified in the greatest of men.

Hardly any thing gives us a more affecting view of the weakness and inconsistency to which the mind of man is liable, than to see men of sound and clear understandings in most respects, and of upright honest hearts, fall into sentiments that lead to gross and painful superstitions. A most remarkable instance of this was Pascal, one of the greatest geniuses and best men that ever lived. He with many others entertained a notion that God made men miserable here, in order to their being happy hereafter; and in consequence of this, he imposed upon himself the most disagreeable mortifications. He even ordered a wall to be built before a window of his study, from which he thought he had too agreeable a prospect. He also wore a girdle full of sharp points next to his skin, and while he was eating or drinking any thing that was grateful to his appetite, he was constantly pricking himself, that he might not be sensible of any pleasure*. His sister too†, who was a woman of fine sense and great piety, actually died of thirst,—as she thought, to the glory of God. It was certainly through a weakness of the same nature in the ingenious and excellent Fenelon, that he submitted without reserve to the arbitrary sentence

* This has been described as a contrivance to check "any vain thought or unprofitable imagination," while conversing upon "religious subjects." See *Biographia Gallica*. 1752. i. 129.—*Ed.*

† Madame Perier, from whose papers the English Life of Pascal was published in 1723.—*Ed.*

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of the pope, when he condemned a book that he published. He even preached to condemn his own book, and forbad his friends to defend it*.

They have not only been good men and of a truly religious turn of mind who have been subject to such groundless superstitions, but the most vicious and abandoned also. Both kinds of instances show the weakness to which human nature is liable. But whereas a good man who is a slave to superstition is an object of the greatest compassion, a wicked man in the same situation is rather a subject of ridicule. What, for instance, can be more completely ridiculous than Louis XI. of France, a man who made no conscience of any villany, going always covered with relics, and wearing a leaden image of the Virgin Mary in his hat, of which it is said he asked pardon for his murders before they were committed. The same prince made a deed of the earldom of Bolloigne to the Virgin Mary.

Even the sentiments of morality, which of all others one would expect to find the most invariable and uncorrupted, are found greatly perverted, and intermixed with notions that are foreign and even contrary to morality, in the minds of some whole nations. Thus the Tartars, with whom it is a sin and a capital crime, as Voltaire says, to put a knife into the fire, to lean against a whip, to beat a horse with a bridle, or to break one bone with another, think it no sin, in some cases, to break their word, to plunder, and commit murder. The same Arab who, if he find you at his door claiming hospitality, would receive you as his brother, and conduct you the next day, would not have scrupled to rob and murder you, as his lawful prey, if he had met you in the desert an hour before. To give instances of the weakness and inconsistency in the human mind which history presents us with, were

* See Ramsay's *Life of Fenelon*. 1723. pp. 118, 132; *Butler*, p. 145.—*Ed.*

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endless. These are sufficient to give us an idea how affecting and useful such views are, and at the same time how entertaining to a speculative mind.

LECTURE III.

THIRDLY, History tends to strengthen the sentiments of virtue, by the variety of views in which it exhibits the conduct of divine Providence, and points out the hand of God, in the affairs of men. For certainly whatever suggests to us the idea of a divine Being, either in the end or means of great events, must be favourable to piety and virtue.

That the world has a *governor*, or *superintendant*, is just as evident as that it had a *maker*. For no person does any thing without some design, or without intending to make some use of it. A telescope is made to be used for the better distinguishing distant objects, the eye itself for seeing things at a moderate distance from us, and no doubt, *men* and the *world* for some end or other.

And as the same Being that made the greatest things made the smallest things also, all being parts of the same system, some use, no doubt, is made of every thing, even what appears to us the most inconsiderable; so that, as our Saviour observed, a sparrow falls not to the ground without God, and the very hairs of our heads are numbered. Also, as nothing was *made*, so nothing can *come to pass*, without the knowledge, the appointment, or permission of God. Something, therefore, is intended by every thing that *happens*, as well as by every thing that is *made*. But in little things a design is not so apparent as in greater and more striking things. Though, therefore, the hand

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of God be really in every thing that happens, and that is recorded in history, our attention is more forcibly drawn to it in great events, and especially in things which happen in a manner unexpected by us*.

How can we help acknowledging the hand of God when we see great and important events brought about by seemingly trifling and inconsiderable means, or by means which seem to have little or no relation to the end; as when our king James and both houses of parliament were rescued from destruction, by a letter which a conspirator sent with a view to save one of the members of the House of Lords for whom he had a friendship?

Who would have imagined that the desire which Henry VIII. had to be divorced from his wife, would have brought about the Reformation in England? The indiscretion of a Portuguese priest, who would not give place to one of the king's officers in Japan, and the obstinacy of the jesuits in refusing to give up the house which a nobleman had given them, when his son claimed it back again, occasioned the extirpation of the Roman catholic religion in that country.

But what most of all shows the hand of Providence, and the weakness and shortsightedness of men, are great events being brought about contrary to the intention of the persons who were the chief instruments of them, and by the very means which were intended to produce a contrary event. Thus persecution has always been the means of promoting the persecuted religion; insomuch that it is become a common proverb, that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

* In events in which the hand of man is least seen, the hand of God is most easily seen and acknowledged; though in fact it is equally concerned in every thing; men and their schemes and exploits being only instruments in his hand, employed as the most fit means to execute his purpose.—*Amer. Edition.*

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Thus likewise, Athens, Lacedæmon, Carthage, Rome, and many other states have been ruined by their own successes. Philip II. of Spain by his intolerable oppression was the cause of the freedom of the States of Holland. Such has often been the consequence of wicked men over-acting their parts. Thus also the senate of Rome was once saved by Catiline's making the signal for the massacre too soon*.

With what satisfaction may a person who has an eye to divine Providence read such a passage as the following in Machiavel,—that Borgia had so well conducted his measures, that he must have been master of Rome and of the whole ecclesiastical estate, after the death of his father, but that it was impossible for him to foresee that he himself would be at the point of death at the very time that Alexander his father finished his life†. They were both poisoned at an entertainment, by a mistake of the waiter, who served them with the wine which was to have taken off their enemies.

It is no uncommon thing, in the history of divine Providence, that persons being known to have abilities shall have been the means of keeping them in obscurity, while others have been advanced in consequence of their seeming insignificance. If Augustus had shown any capacity as a statesman or general, any greatness of soul, or any thing in the least enterprising, at first, he would probably never have been master of the Roman empire. But while Cicero and Antony, in their turns, thought to make a tool of him, they, unknown to themselves, increased his power and influence at the expense of their own.

* "Quod ni Catilina maturâsset pro curiâ signum sociis dare; eo die, post conditam urbem Romam, pessumum facinus patratum foret." *Sallust.—Ed.*

† See Machiavel's *Prince*. Ch. vii. *ad fin.—Ed.*

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In this view it is very amusing and useful to consider to what a different purpose the labour, powers, and works of men and nations have been employed, from what was originally thought of and intended; as that the Romans, after all their conquests of other nations, should be often governed by savage and tyrannical barbarians, such as Maximin and others; and that that city, the mistress of the world, which was built by Romulus, and whose power was enlarged by such men as Camillus, Scipio Africanus, Marius, Sylla, Cæsar, Pompey, and Trajan, should now be in subjection to the pope, and the seat of a power totally different from what had before resided in it, and of which the founders could have no conception. How far was Constantine from foreseeing that Constantinople would be the capital of the Turkish empire, and the principal support of a religion opposite to that which he established? How far, also, were the heads of the Grecian commonwealths from foreseeing that their country, the seat of arts and liberty, would ever become the most ignorant and enslaved of all the states of Europe *?

A regard to divine Providence is likewise extremely useful to heighten our satisfaction in reading history, and throw an agreeable light upon the most gloomy and disgusting parts of it. With a view to this, the most disagreeable objects in history will bear to be looked upon with satisfaction. And could we see every event in all its connexions and most distant influences, we should no doubt perfectly acquiesce in every thing that comes to pass under the government of God; in seeing that all evils lead to, and terminate in, a greater good. But in many cases we see events which

* How would the author have rejoiced to have anticipated the present appearances in favour of that interesting and injured country.—*Ed.*

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give us pain at first sight, and which occasion much regret and disappointment to those who give more scope to their passions than to their reflection while they are reading; which, nevertheless, if we look no further than the next and immediate consequences, we shall be thoroughly satisfied and pleased with.

No person conversant with the ancient classical historians, and who has thereby acquired a classical taste and classical notions of *liberty* *, but regrets that Rome, in the height of its glory, should fall under the power of masters. But it is because he does not consider that all the provinces of the vast Roman empire were most miserably oppressed and plundered by the republican governors, who had little to fear from courts of justice; but were relieved and happy under the government of persons who lived in constant fear of being accused of mal-administration, to an inexorable master. Nay, the provinces were not much less happy under Tiberius and Nero, than under Trajan and the Antonines.

A reader of Thucydides is apt to be extremely mortified at the ill treatment of Alcibiades, and the defeat of the Athenians before Syracuse. But it is because he does not think what would probably have been the consequence of the success of that expedition; namely, the slavery of Greece, and, from the nature of its government, the confusion and slavery of Athens too. As success naturally points out our favourite hero to us, we cannot help conceiving a violent indignation against Hanno, for taking no more care to send recruits to Hannibal after the battle of Cannæ. But justly did he and all Carthage dread the power of Hannibal,

* Notions most inaccurate, with which poets and historians have conspired to delude the world. In Greece or Rome there never existed a *people*, but only privileged masters and powerless slaves, who were regarded, like West Indian Negroes, as things rather than persons.—*Ed.*

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when master of Rome, who was able to change the whole form of their government even when he was conquered.

These obvious remarks I mention here, to show the necessity of thought and *reflection* in reading history. Further observations of this kind, and such as are less obvious, I shall reserve for another part of this course of lectures, in which I shall endeavour to enter a little further into the views and conduct of divine Providence in the government of the world.

In the fourth place, History, in the misfortunes and hardships to which the most distinguished personages have been reduced, gives us a deep conviction of the instability of all human things, and prepares our minds to submit to adversity with more patience and resignation, as to a condition from which we see none are exempt. Even the misfortunes and disappointments of brave and good men, who have brought themselves into difficulties in consequence of their generous attempts in favour of the liberties and best interests of mankind, do not, as exhibited in history, in the least tend to slacken our zeal in the same glorious cause; at the same time that they make us more prudent in the choice and prosecution of our measures to attain the same end, and dispose us to yield to disappointment with a better grace. That an acquaintance with history has this effect, I appeal to what any person feels after reading of the untimely end of Agis, Cato, Brutus, Hampden, and the great Algernon Sydney. The honourable mention that will to the end of the world be made of such glorious though unfortunate men as these, will raise up more friends to the same great interests; while their misfortunes will only serve to make those friends more prudent, and therefore, probably, more successful in their endeavours.

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But, independently of these martyrs of liberty raising up more and more successful patrons of it, the consideration of the remarkable reverses of fortune, in the history of considerable personages, has a fine effect upon the human mind. It wonderfully softens and calms it, and gives it an excellent temper for encountering with the vicissitudes of life. What other sensations do we feel, while we read that Henrietta, daughter of Henry IV. of France and wife to Charles I. of England, was reduced to the utmost extremity of poverty; and that her daughter, who was afterwards married to a brother of Louis XIV. is said to have lain in bed for want of fuel to keep her warm, while the people of Paris, blind with rage, paid no attention to their sufferings. The same kind of sensations we feel when we read of the great and successful general Belisarius (if the story be true) begging his bread; of Cortez, the renowned conqueror of Mexico, living unknown and in disgrace in Spain, and scarce able to get to speak to his master Charles V., though when the king asked who the fellow was that was so clamorous to speak to him, he cried out, "I am one who have gotten your majesty more provinces than your father left you towns." He afterwards served in a rank little higher than that of a common soldier on the coast of Barbary.

Fifthly, These great reverses of fortune, and calamities of men in high stations, at the same time that they are hardly ever known to discourage men of ability and spirit from undertaking the public service when regularly called to it, may justly make persons who are born to private stations, and who have no opportunity of rising above them, content with their situation. The many who have abdicated royalty, as Christiana queen of Sweden, Charles V. emperor of Germany, Victor Amadeus king of Sardinia, John Casimir king of

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Poland, and others, convince us that crowns do not always sit easy; and that persons in high stations have need of a strong sense of honour and integrity to make their fatigues and misfortunes tolerable.

It is no unuseful sentiment that we collect from reading that Richlieu shortened his days by the uneasiness with which he was devoured in the fulness of his power. What Voltaire says of Louis XIV. is an excellent memento to the ambitious: that he saw all his family perish by premature deaths; that though, towards the close of his life, he appeared in public as usual, in private, the pain of his many misfortunes pierced him to the heart, and threw him into convulsions; that he met with domestic losses at the conclusion of an unsuccessful war, and before he was sure of obtaining a peace, and at a time when a famine had wasted his kingdom; and that he lost in the minds of his subjects, during the last three years of his life, all the respect and esteem he had gained by his great actions.

The advantage of preferring a private situation, especially to entering into the views of faction, we see in the security and long life of Atticus, in the most distracted times of the Roman history; and in Richard Cromwell, who lived to a great age contented and happy *, whereas his father never knew what happiness was. The history of very few great statesmen can match that of cardinal Fleury, of whom we read that his schemes were crowned with success from the year 1726 to 1742; that he lived ninety years and preserved his faculties unimpaired to the last; which

* He died in 1712, in his 90th year: "a rare instance," as Burnet remarks, "of the instability of human greatness and of the security of innocence."—*Ed.*

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makes his historian say, that if ever there was a happy man upon earth, it was doubtless cardinal Fleury.

Lastly, Those observations on the tempers and manners of men, which we may collect every day from common life, affect us much more strongly when we see them exemplified in the history of great personages. We see for instance, every day, that almost all persons who are entrusted with power abuse it. But this is better exemplified in kings and ministers of state. We see again, that men in low circumstances are apt to be despised, and that court is always paid to the great and the powerful. But this maxim receives a stronger confirmation, and makes a deeper impression, than any occurrence in private life could occasion, when we think what court was paid to Oliver Cromwell, by all the princes of Europe; while Charles II. then in exile, could not obtain an interview with the ministers of either France or Spain, at the treaty of the Pyrenees, though he made a journey on purpose to obtain it*.

It is a common and just observation, that, through the inconstancy of our nature, men are liable to conceive hasty and unreasonable disgust at their situation, and yet, when they have changed it, wish to resume it; and this we see exemplified in private life almost every day. But ever so many examples of this kind do not make so great an impression upon us as the history of Victor Amadeus king of Sardinia, who abdicated the crown through mere caprice; but found, as some historian says, that the company of his mistress, who was become his wife, devotion, and the tranquillity of retirement, could not satisfy a soul occupied during fifty years with the affairs of Europe. He was

* This was in 1659. See *Clarendon*. 1712. iii. 677, 686.—*Ed.*

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desirous of regaining the throne even by force, and afterwards died in confinement.

How incapable riches and power are to satisfy the mind of man, is an observation which few persons, in the course of their own experience, have not seen occasion to make. But the sentiment makes a deeper impression upon us when we see it exemplified in the history of statesmen and conquerors, and as it is beautifully exhibited in a conversation which passed between Pyrrhus and his minister Cyneas, before their expedition into Italy. The minister asked the king what he proposed to do when he had subdued the Romans? He answered, pass into Sicily. What then? said the minister. Conquer the Carthaginians, replies the king. And what follows that? says the minister. Be sovereign of Greece, and then enjoy ourselves, said the king. And why, replied the sensible minister, can we not do this *last* even now?

To add one instance more: we see the vanity of the living, in their boundless provision for futurity, and in the dissipation of the large fortunes of covetous persons, by the extravagance of their heirs. But it does not affect us near so much as when we are reading in history, that the riches which Sixtus V. amassed in his pontificate, and those which Henry IV. of France had with great difficulty saved, were squandered away within less than a year after their deaths; also that the treasure which Henry VII. of England had raised by every art of extortion went almost as fast.

Thus we have seen how, by history, our minds are agreeably entertained, our passions are exercised, and our judgements are formed, so as either to fit us for the business of life, or furnish us with materials for science; how sentiments of virtue are acquired, and

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the best moral maxims of conduct are most deeply impressed upon our minds. All these advantages result from history as a *study*. There are other advantages resulting to mankind from it, in a different manner, as only one instrument of recording transactions. How imperfect, for instance, without history, would be our knowledge of genealogies, and consequently of the order of important successions; and how precarious would be the advantage resulting from conventions and treaties of all kinds, if all the articles of them were reposited only in the memory of the contracting parties. We read that the boundaries of some of the Grecian states were once determined by a verse of Homer, who, in his description of Greece, relates what they were in his time.

The preceding account of the uses of history will assist us in determining what has formerly been a subject of debate among the critics; namely, at what *age* history is proper to be read.

Considering the various uses to which the study of history has been shown to be subservient, I see no reason why we should hesitate to pronounce, that it can neither be begun too early, nor continued too late. If history amuse the imagination, exercise and improve the passions, inspire a taste for true glory, just sentiments of, and a love for, virtue, and thereby form the *temper*, and prepare men for conversing with the world, —what can be more proper for young persons? And since the mind cannot be too well furnished in these respects, and men cannot have too large a stock of this *anticipated experience*, the study of it must be useful while there remains any thing of the part we have to act on the theatre of the world. Moreover, since history furnishes materials for the finest speculations

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and the most important sciences, it cannot but be of service while we make any use of our intellectual faculties.

Since history may be considered as containing examples of the sciences of *morals* and *politics* chiefly, no doubt a person who has studied these sciences is qualified to read history with more pleasure and advantage. But then it must likewise be considered, that it is impossible to be master of these sciences without a knowledge of history. Their influences and uses are reciprocal. Thus the person who has studied the grammar of any language will read authors who have written in it with more ease and advantage. But grammars could never have been made without a previous knowledge of the languages for which they were made, nor even learned, without the use of examples borrowed from those languages.

That young persons are not capable of making a right use of historical examples in a moral respect, was obviated when the advantages of history above experience were mentioned. If what was said there be considered, it will appear much safer for a child to be trusted with a piece of history, than to hear the common news of the town he lives in. It is certain, that neither in the one nor the other is exact justice done to the characters of men in the events of their lives. But in history it is done much more completely than it is within the compass of any particular person's observation.

A proper regard, no doubt, ought to be had to the age, experience, and previously acquired knowledge, as well as the intended sphere of life, of the persons to whom particular histories are recommended. It would be very preposterous to advise any person to begin the study of history with such writers as Polybius or Ta-

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citus, and to end with Livy, Quintus Curtius, or Cornelius Nepos. Common sense will direct that histories which tend chiefly to amuse the imagination, or enforce the plainest instructions in morals, ought rather to be recommended to young persons, who will both have the most relish for such works, and to whom they will be of the greatest use; and that histories which furnish more exercise for the judgement should be reserved for an age in which that faculty is riper. However, there can be no great inconvenience in young persons being indulged in reading almost all histories promiscuously. Their natural disposition and previous acquirements will direct them to what they are most capable of profiting by, and the higher uses of the same works may be safely left to be reaped at a second perusal, in a more advanced stage of life. No general history is better calculated for the use of young persons than that of Rollin.

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PART II.

OF THE SOURCES OF HISTORY.

LECTURE IV.

THOUGH it cannot be supposed that mankind in very early and rude ages could be aware of any of the advantages which arise from History as a *study*, or that they could even have much occasion to transmit the knowledge of any of their transactions to posterity; yet it must be acknowledged, that the apprehension of the usefulness of some contrivance for this purpose must very soon have arisen in the minds of a people who were forming themselves into any kind of *society*. No society, for instance, can subsist without compacts and agreements; and these are so manifestly liable to be forgotten or evaded, (particularly as the obligation of keeping a promise is seldom found to have much force among barbarians,) that it must have immediately appeared desirable to have some standing memorials of them, as a better security for their observance than the memory or the honour of the contracting parties. Various other more extensive uses of *records* could not fail to occur in a more improved state of society; and with the improvements of society and the multiplied uses of records, it may reasonably be supposed that the methods of recording would likewise improve. Accordingly we find that these have been various; and the traces of past events which the practice of

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these methods has left in the world, are the chief sources to which all historians must have recourse for their materials.

Under this second head, *Of the sources of history*, I propose to enumerate all, or at least the principal, methods that have been made use of for transmitting to posterity the knowledge of past events; and I shall treat of them in what I apprehend to be their natural order, beginning with the first and least perfect, and ending with the last and most perfect, that human ingenuity has yet invented. Under each head I shall consider the nature of the evidence on which it rests, and give a general account of the information we may expect from it. After these *direct* sources of history, I shall mention the principal of those means by which we are able *indirectly* to ascertain and transmit the knowledge of important facts.

Before the invention of the arts of writing, carving, and painting, *oral tradition* must have been the only vehicle of historical knowledge; and with respect to this, it is well worth our notice, that the wisdom of Providence has made provision for the instruction of youth, in the dispositions and circumstances of their aged parents. When the active scenes of their lives are closed, their active powers being spent, but the active passions of their nature still so much awake as deeply to interest them in public transactions, since they can have but little share in, and enjoyment of, the *present*, they are perpetually reviewing, and taking pleasure in relating, the *past scenes* of their lives; which, being impressed when their minds were vigorous and retentive, are faithfully retained in memory. Thus the natural talkativeness of old age, meeting with the natural inquisitiveness and curiosity of youth, makes a happy coincidence of circumstances, very

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favourable to the propagation of knowledge and instruction.

It must be confessed, and it is obvious to conceive, that this method of conveying historical knowledge must have been very imperfect, and inadequate for several important uses of history. But, notwithstanding this, it might have been much more extensive and exact than we, who chiefly make use of different and more perfect methods, can well imagine. It is universally true, that when any art has been long disused, it grows less perfect and more insufficient than when mankind, through want of any other, were obliged to make the most of it; and it is therefore apt to suffer more, upon comparison with a new and more cultivated art, than, in the nature of things, it ought to do. Thus we see that persons who have no knowledge of written numbers are much readier in mental computation, than those who have been used to have recourse to their pen upon every occasion.

It is very possible, therefore, that we may entertain too mean an opinion of the state of historical knowledge before the invention of the present arts of recording events; since persons who had no histories to read would make more inquiries, and take more pains to procure information from all quarters, and would of course be more capable of informing others, than any persons now living could be with respect to what they have not learned from books. It is not improbable but that in those unlettered ages, every elderly person would be possessed of a little treasure of history; which would not consist of his own family stories only, but contain many particulars relative to the general state of his country and other neighbouring nations.

These informations were the sources from which

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Herodotus derived the greatest part of his history; and the growing reputation of that author demonstrates how much real and useful knowledge a man of sense and inquiry may get by such channels.

To secure the remembrance of very important facts, particularly of compacts and treaties, we find it to have been the custom in all nations before the use of letters, and even continued long after their introduction, to recite them before large stated assemblies of people. Hereby, both an air of importance was given to them, and a greater number of witnesses was provided for them. For many ages in this country, every contract of importance was made in some public court; and no bargain or sale of goods was valid unless made in the open market. It is not wholly improbable, but that it might be in consequence of such customs as these that Herodotus was led to recite his written history before the general assembly of Greece at the Olympic games.

It is a very good method which the Indians of North America use, to enable them to retain in memory all the articles of a complex treaty. The public orator delivers to one of his attendants a string of *wampum** upon the recital of every article; so that each is intrusted to a different person, and he is provided with a memorial that may frequently remind him of it, and thereby the more deeply impress it on his memory.

The paintings of the Mexicans answered the same purpose much better, and contained a pretty full history of the nation from a very early period. They consisted of the figures of natural objects, sometimes contracted into *hieroglyphics*, mixed with many symbolical characters, and the names of persons and places were distinguished by the figures of the objects which

* "The current money among the Indians." See Colden's *History of the Five Nations*, 1755. p. 3. note.—*Ed.*

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the names expressed. Thus, with the help of tradition (there being persons whose business it was to explain these pictures) they conveyed to future ages a very competent knowledge of the past.

But, notwithstanding every method of improving merely oral tradition, it seems to have been not without reason that sir Isaac Newton lays it down as a general maxim, that things said to have been done above a hundred, or two hundred, years before the use of letters are worthy of little credit*. And if we consider the nature of evidence, the reasonableness of this assertion will be more apparent; and particularly if we attend to the great difference there is between dependent and independent evidence.

If the evidence of a fact depend upon a number of original witnesses no way connected with one another, so that the insufficiency of one shall not at all affect the rest, the fact will not be improbable, unless the deficiency of credibility in them all be very great. But if the evidence be supported by a number of witnesses dependent upon one another, so that the insufficiency of any one shall wholly invalidate that of all who come after, the credibility of each separately taken must be very great, to make the evidence of the whole authentic. In the former case, the more witnesses there are, the better. For each evidence, though ever so weak, increases the probability, and brings us nearer to certainty. But in the latter case, the fewer there are, the better; for each evidence, though ever so strong, lessens the probability, and makes the fact more uncertain.

This subject Dr. Hartley has illustrated by the mathematical doctrine of chances, in the following man-

* See "The Introduction" to his *Chronology*. 1728. p. 7.—*Ed.*

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ner*: putting $\frac{1}{a}$ for the absolute value of each dependent evidence, or the insufficiency of each independent evidence, absolute certainty in the former case, and absolute uncertainty in the latter, being equal to unity, and making the number of witnesses the *power* of n in both. From this it will be manifest, upon a little attention, that provided the power (n) be considerable (a) may be very little without greatly diminishing the value of the expression; that is, without greatly lessening the probability in the one case, or the improbability in the other. For example, let $a=3$ and $n=10$; then $a^{\frac{1}{n}}=\frac{1}{30,000,000,000}$ which, in independent evidence, will be little less than absolute certainty; and in dependent evidence, little less than absolute uncertainty.

The value of each separate evidence must be estimated from considering the opportunity any person had of knowing the truth, and his fidelity in communicating it. In historical evidence, where an author's moral character is not known, his veracity will be judged of according to his situation, by considering whether it was such as would lay him under any bias to falsify, or not.

From the first of these considerations we infer that the histories of England, Scotland, and other European states, before the Roman conquests, and the introduction of letters (as they are grounded chiefly upon oral tradition), must be very uncertain: and hence the marks of fable in some of the first books of almost all very ancient histories. From the second consideration we are led to give little credit to the accounts of either friends or enemies in the histories of rival nations, and particularly of opposite sects or parties, unless we have an opportunity of comparing the accounts of both sides.

* See *Observations on Man.* Prop. 87. 1791. i. 335.—*Ed.*

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Thus the character which the Romans have given of the Carthaginians, and even their accounts of facts in their intercourse with them, will be for ever reckoned dubious; whereas the most exact and impartial history of their transactions with the Grecian states may be extracted from the accounts of both nations. And from both considerations is founded the great degree of credit that is universally given to the histories of Thucydides and Xenophon. Both these authors lived in the time of which they write; both, though Athenians and employed in public characters by their country, were ill-used by their countrymen, and obliged to take refuge among the Lacedemonians; so that it may be pretty fairly presumed, that one prejudice would nearly balance another, and their minds be left, as nearly as possible, in a state of absolute impartiality.

The comparison of the Egyptian histories of Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and what Plato relates from a Poem of Solon's, shows the natural progress of fiction in history, when there are no records to curb and restrain the invention of a people bent upon magnifying their antiquities. After Cambyses had destroyed the records of Egypt, the priests of that country were continually adding to the catalogue of their kings, and carrying more backward the dates of past transactions, as appears by the following circumstances. Solon, Herodotus, and Diodorus, all travelled into Egypt at different and successive periods of time, and all had their information from the priests of that country. According to Solon, who was the first of the three that visited Egypt, the wars of the great gods happened in the days of Cecrops, but according to Herodotus they must have been more ancient; and Diodorus, who wrote four hundred years after Herodotus, inserts many nameless kings between those whom he placed in continual

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succession; so that their earliest history was then removed into the remotest antiquity.

The credibility of historians who treat of their own times, and do not compile from the writings of others, particularly of those who themselves bore a part in public affairs, as Thucydides, Xenophon, Cæsar, Clarendon, Sully, &c. come under the consideration of original evidences. With respect to writers of this class, it is obvious to remark, that the ancients were, in circumstances in which it was much less easy to receive information than the moderns, by reason of their want of the methods which are now in use for the speedy conveying of intelligence. For these we are indebted to that freer intercourse which more extensive polities and commerce have promoted between different states, and especially the establishment of posts in all the civilised countries of Europe.

In ancient times a nation might be subdued, and hardly any but its next neighbours hear of it. This may be the reason why so little notice is taken of the wars of the Romans and Carthaginians by the contemporary Greek writers, who do not so strictly confine themselves to their subject, as purposely to decline the mention of foreign incidents that would embellish their works. For a like reason it is remarkable that all the states of Europe were long ignorant both of Jenghis Khan and his conquests. But since commerce and navigation have been so much extended, nothing can happen in the most remote parts of the civilised world but the knowledge of it is immediately communicated to all the rest.

It is a pretty just observation of Mr. Hume, that, in general, there is more candour and sincerity in the ancient historians, but less exactness and care than in the moderns. The reason of the latter may be, that

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the first writers of history could not be aware of the *use* of such minute exactness in relating a variety of historical circumstances. For example, not having observed, or sufficiently attended to, such subjects as government, laws, manners, arts, &c. they were not aware that the progress of them would ever become a matter of such general and reasonable curiosity as it is now. Also, having seen no important end answered by chronological exactness, and having no fixed æras to guide them, they would naturally not be so attentive to fix the precise *dates* of events, as the more extensive views of modern historians make it desirable that they had been.

On the other hand, the ancient and classical historians had an advantage in the *subject* of their histories, with respect to the certainty of intelligence concerning the objects and motives of schemes and transactions. They treat chiefly of the politics and wars of republican states, in which nothing can be kept secret. For besides that modern politics are much more complex and refined than the ancient, more pains are taken to conceal them; which, in European courts and monarchies, or states in which the executive power is lodged in one hand, or a few hands, it is more easy to do. Notwithstanding this, so much are the methods of coming at intelligence multiplied and improved, in the more connected modern states of Europe, that the sagacity even of some contemporary writers has arrived at remarkable certainty and exactness in their accounts of public measures; and even with respect to those nations which are the most famed for the intricacy of their politics. Gerard, secretary to the Duke d'Epernon, relates, that when Davila's history was read by that old man, who had been a principal actor in that age, he expressed his wonder how the author could

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be so well informed of the most secret councils and measures of those times.

LECTURE V.

A METHOD of transmitting the knowledge of important events with greater accuracy than by simple narration would be by *historical poems*, with which few barbarous nations have been long wholly unprovided. A story reduced to any kind of *metre* would suffer little by repetition; and it can hardly be supposed that any variation in the repetition would be of such a nature as to affect the general facts it contained. Considering that all the learning of those nations must necessarily consist of those poems, and that, being composed chiefly in honour of their founders and heroes, they would be constantly sung in religious ceremonies, and on festivals instituted to their memory (which circumstances would greatly contribute to extend and perpetuate them), it is easily conceived what use an historian, who could come at the knowledge of such poems, might make of them.

The Bards among the Britons and ancient Germans, and the Scalds among the Scandinavians, are most worthy of our notice in this respect, as they were an order of men whose sole employment it was to compose and repeat those poems. Olaus Magnus was much indebted to the poems of the Scalds in his history of one of the northern nations. It were to be wished that the poems of the Welsh* and Irish were better known.

Even the poems of Homer (particularly the Iliad) bear evident marks of their being founded on fact,

* The reader is referred to the inquiries of Mr. Sharon Turner on this subject.—*Ed.*

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notwithstanding the mixture of the absurd Grecian mythology with them*. This author is much more circumstantial than a mere writer of fiction, particularly so ancient a writer, would ever have thought of being. The remarkable distinctness of his characters is likewise no bad foundation for supposing that they were copied from real life. In both these respects the Æneid of Virgil is very defective. The historical part of that work is neither so circumstantial, nor are the characters introduced into it so distinctly marked. It has, therefore, much more the air of a romance.

Particularity in facts and characters necessarily belongs, and closely adheres, to whatever has actually happened. It is therefore almost impossible to exclude the mention of the particular circumstances of time, place, and character, in a relation of facts; whereas these being superfluous in the views of a writer of fiction, and not necessarily obtruding themselves into the story, they are generally omitted. Besides, such stories are commonly more agreeable to the trite maxims of criticism, as being free from every thing that is not essential to the main story. But this kind of correctness is purchased at the expense of what is one of the best characteristics of truth. And happy has it been for the cause of truth, that the importance of introducing such a number of seemingly unnecessary particulars into narrations was not more early attended to, as hereby it is much more easy to distinguish truth from fiction in ancient writings.

Another means of preserving traditions, which has been more general than historical poems, is by *visible monuments*, such as *pillars, edifices*, or mere *heaps of*

* This, however, was disputed in 1797, by the learned Jacob Bryant. On his *Dissertation* and Wakefield's *Reply*, see *Mem. of Wakefield*, 1804. ii. p. 101 to 107.—*Ed.*

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stones, erected upon occasion of any remarkable event*. These monuments, engaging the attention of the rising generation, would occasion such a succession of inquiries and informations, concerning the origin and use of them, as would long preserve the knowledge of the transactions they were connected with. Of this nature probably was in part the tower of Babel, as well as the pillar that Jacob erected at Hebron, and the heap of stones jointly raised by him and Laban as a memorial of their mutual reconciliation and covenant.

As these monuments had no *inscriptions*, their explanation must only have been traditional; but as the facts were connected with visible and striking associated circumstances, they would have a great advantage over those conveyed by mere oral tradition. The sight of the monument could not fail to revive in the minds of all who lived in the neighbourhood, the remembrance of the use and design of it: and while the monument subsisted, it can hardly be supposed that even a migration of the people would be followed by an absolute loss of the history. For the new-comers, though not equally interested in the events referred to with the late inhabitants, could not help being induced, by principles common to human nature, to get what information they could procure with respect to such curiosities in the countries they settled in.

Giving *names* to countries, towns, &c. has been made use of, as an expedient for perpetuating the memory of their planters or founders, from times of the earliest antiquity to the present age; from Enoch, which had its name from the son of Cain †, down to Pittsburg ‡,

* See Goguet, *Origin of Laws*, &c. P. i. B. ii. Ch. vi.—*Ed.*

† *Gen.* iv. 17.—*Ed.*

‡ Originally Fort-Pitt, so named in honour of the first Lord Chatham. —*Ed.*

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which was so called in the late war. Indeed there is hardly a name given either to a person or place in the Old Testament, without an historical reason for it. And where transactions would not be to the honour of the persons concerned in them, the officious zeal of their enemies has sometimes affixed opprobrious names and epithets to the places which were the theatre of them, which bid equally fair to adhere to them. Thus the field in which pope Gregory treated with Louis the Feeble*, when they were both known to enter into the negociation with a view to deceive one another, went for a long time, and is perhaps to this day known, by the name of *the field of lies*†.

Of the same nature with public monuments and traditional explanations, are *national customs*, in commemoration of remarkable historical events: such as the Athenians sending annually a ship to Delos; the paschal supper among the Jews; the Lord's supper among Christians; our making bonfires on the 5th of November, and carrying oak boughs on the 29th of May.

The philosopher Anaximander effectually provided for his not being forgotten; when, being asked by the magistrates at Lampsacum, where he had resided, what they should do to honour his memory, he made the seemingly small and simple request, that the boys might have leave to play on the anniversary of his decease.

These historical customs would not indeed, like historical monuments, remain in the country where they were first established, and thereby come to the knowledge of the new inhabitants; but, which is an equivalent advantage, they are easily transferred with

* I 833. See Henault's *Abrégé Chronol.* 1789. i. 82.—*Ed.*

† "Une plaine entre Basle et Strasbourg, appellée depuis 'le champ du mensonge.'" See *Ibid.*—*Ed.*

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the people that migrate, wherever they go; and in another respect they are more useful to an historian, as they assist him in tracing the origin of colonies, which would naturally retain the customs of their mother-country. Thus Newton infers from what we read of the practice of circumcision in Colchis and Iberia, that the inhabitants of those countries were probably a colony of Egyptians, and perhaps left there in the expedition of Sesostris *. By the same manner of reasoning, the Chinese have also of late been suspected to have been a colony of Egyptians, and the present inhabitants of North America to be of the race of the ancient Sarmatians, inhabiting the north-eastern parts of Asia.

It is not improbable but that the corruption to which the traditional explanations of naked monuments is unavoidably liable, might first suggest to mankind the expediency of some contrivance to make them their own interpreters; either by the form or the situation of them, as in the pyramids of Egypt, trophies of victory, &c. or by engraving upon them some emblems or devices, expressive of the uses they were intended to answer. Thus Sesostris is said to have erected pillars in the countries he subdued, and to have engraved upon some of them emblems expressive of the cowardice or weakness of the inhabitants, upon others symbols of the vigour and spirit with which they had opposed his invasion.

As the names of *men*, in all original languages were borrowed from those of *things*, the figures of those things which bore the same name with any person, engraved upon his sepulchre, was no bad method of ex-

* Though others are of opinion that they were part of the ten tribes that were carried into captivity by the Assyrians, and settled in that country, which was then under their dominion.—*Amer. Edition.*

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pressing to whom it belonged. This method might have been used before alphabetical writing was invented; and as the bishop of Clogher* ingeniously conjectures, may easily be supposed to have given rise to the worship of animals and vegetables among the Egyptians †.

As, in after ages, improvements were made in this method by the Greeks who settled in Egypt, who erected statues holding in their hands the things which the former inhabitants had been satisfied with portraying upon the sepulchres, the same learned person, with great appearance of reason, conjectures that the statue of Jupiter Casius holding a pomegranate in his hand was originally designed for Caphtor, who is mentioned by Moses, and whose name signifies a pomegranate in Hebrew, which was the original language of that country. This conjecture receives additional confirmation from considering that this Caphtor, who seems to have come along with his great grandfather Ham into Egypt, was "the first Egyptian warrior that we meet with any account of in real history, who extended his conquests beyond the boundaries of Egypt," and, "who, in company with his brethren the Philistines, dispossessed the Avim of that part of the land of Canaan which was afterwards called Philistia,—and was deified after his death ‡." Nor is it improbable that he might have been the same person also with Dionysius the elder, or the great Bacchus.

The apparent convenience of those monuments to receive inscriptions would probably set men's ingenuity

* Dr. Robert Clayton. He died in 1758, aged 63. See *Biog. Brit.* iii. 620. —*Ed.*

† See the Bishop's "Remarks on the Origin of Hieroglyphics, and the Mythology of the ancient Heathens," annexed to *A Journal from Grand Cairo to Mount Sinai, &c.* 1753. p. 94.—*Ed.*

‡ See *Ibid.* pp. 86 to 92.—*Ed.*

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to work, and greatly accelerate the invention of *writing*, both hieroglyphical and alphabetical. And there is reason to believe that letters and characters of all kinds were made upon wood, stone, metal, and such like durable materials, long before they were made use of in common life.

The imperfection of monuments, even with inscriptions, is, that they could record only a *few events*, in a manner destitute of *circumstances*, and that they are not easily multiplied; so that, remaining single, and little care being taken to renew them, the materials would in time moulder away, and the inscription become effaced. And the attention which was not sufficient to keep them in repair, would hardly suffice for the preservation of the traditional explications. The Arundelian marbles*, which contain all the leading events of the Grecian history till sixty years after the death of Alexander the Great; and the Capitoline marbles, which contain a catalogue of the Roman magistrates, and the principal events of their history, during the time of the commonwealth, are justly reckoned among the most valuable remains of monumental inscriptions.

LECTURE VI.

Coins and medals, with respect to their uses in History, may be considered as a kind of *portable monuments*. The materials of both are similar, and the events they record are single and remarkable. The small size of a coin does not even admit of its being

* "Called also the Parian Chronicle, supposed to have been engraven 264 B. C." See *Arundel*, in *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1789. i. 342.—*Ed.*

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so circumstantial as a monument; and though, for the same reason, it be more liable to be lost, it is also more capable of being concealed, and is not exposed to the injuries of the weather*. Also, as great numbers are struck at the same time, they are easily multiplied, so that, upon the whole, they stand a much fairer chance of being seen by posterity. Accordingly, we have innumerably more coins that were struck in ancient times than there are ancient monuments standing in the world; and though we may be more liable to be imposed upon by pretended *antiques*, this consideration affects the virtuoso more than the historian. For if the new ones be exact copies of ancient coins, they corrupt no history; and it can hardly be worth any person's while to coin a piece whose known existence has not acquired it some degree of reputation.

If we attend only to the original and primary use of coins, we ought to make no mention of them among the *direct* methods of recording events. For all the ancient coins which have now obtained the name of *medals*, were nothing more than the stamped money of ancient nations. Yet as the monumental use of such portable pieces of metal, struck by the direction of a state, was so very obvious, it was not long before this double use of them was attended to. We know nothing of the impression of the *Crœsei*, coins so called from Crœsus, who is the first prince in the world whose coined money is mentioned by historians, and which were afterwards re-coined by Darius the Mede, and from him received the name of *Darics*†. But the Latins coined their first money with the head of Saturn on one side and the figure of a ship on the other, in memory of his coming into Italy by sea; and

* See Pope's *Verses* prefixed to Addison's *Dialogues*.—*Ed.*

† See Newton's *Chronol.* p. 321. *A. U. Hist.* v. 130.—*Ed.*

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upon every new event, or the accession of a new magistrate in the Roman empire, the dies of their coins were changed, to take proper notice of that new circumstance. No anecdotes, indeed, of a private nature are found on them. For though some few pieces under the emperors were coined in honour of the senate, the army, or the people; no private persons had that honour, except they were related to the emperor.

Such a number of events have been recorded by ancient medals, and so great has been the care of the moderns in collecting and preserving them, that they now give great light to history; in confirming such passages as are true in old authors, in ascertaining what was before doubtful, and in recording such as were omitted. It is remarkable that history scarce makes any mention of Balbec, or Palmyra, whose ruins are so famous; and we have little knowledge of them but what is supplied by inscriptions. "It is by this means that Monsieur Vaillant has disembroiled a history that was lost to the world before his time, and out of a short collection of medals he has given us a chronicle of the kings of Syria*;" though it will hardly be regarded as supplying any important defect in history, that medals inform us of wives and children of emperors, which have not been taken notice of by any person whatever.

All the principal events of the reign of Louis XIV. have been recorded in a set of medals, struck for that very purpose. But the inconvenience attending modern medals is, that, not being used as the current coin of any state, and being made of very costly materials, they are confined to the cabinets of a few persons. This was not the case of any of the ancient

* Addison, Dial. I. *Works*, 1777. iii. p. 20.—*Ed.*

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medals*, except a few of a larger size, and more curious workmanship, which were struck by the emperors for presents to their friends, foreign princes, or ambassadors, &c., and which we now distinguish by the name of *medallions*.

But medals are not only, or perhaps chiefly, valuable as they are a means of preserving the knowledge of the leading events in history; they have likewise been a means of transmitting to us a more perfect knowledge of many things which we are desirous of forming an idea of, than any history, by means of verbal description, could possibly give us. We find upon them traces of *customs* and *manners*, the figures of ancient buildings, instruments, habits, and of a variety of things which show the state of the *arts* and conveniences of life, in the age wherein the medals were struck; and many things in *nature* which historians have passed unnoticed, as being familiar in the times in which they wrote, or have omitted, as not being aware that they would ever engage the curiosity of after ages.

It is also very amusing to view upon medals the features of the great men of antiquity; which, if they were struck in an age in which the arts flourished, as is the case with many of the Roman, and particularly of the Grecian medals, we can have no doubt but that they are sufficiently exact. And even if they were struck in an age which did not excel in the arts of painting, statuary, and carving; yet, as faces are chiefly drawn upon coins in *profile*, any person who has taken notice of *shadows* may conceive that a very striking likeness may easily be hit off in that way. However, in general, so extremely exact are the drawings of most single objects upon the old medals of the best ages, that even

* "An old Roman," says Addison, "had his purse full of the same pieces that we now preserve in cabinets.—A fresh coin was a kind of *Gazette*, that published the latest news of the empire." *Works*. iii. p. 147.—*Ed.*

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those famous painters Raphael, Le Brun, and Rubens, thought it worth their while thoroughly to study them, and preserve cabinets of them. And indeed the generality of figures on many of the Grecian medals have a design, an attitude, a force, and a delicacy, in the expression even of the muscles and veins of human figures, and they are supported by so high a relief, that they infinitely surpass both the Roman medals and most of the moderns. The only defect in the drawing upon old medals is, that buildings and other objects are seen only in front, and never in perspective, an art with which the ancients were but little acquainted.

Upon medals are seen plans of the most considerable *buildings* of ancient Rome. "One might make an entire galley," says Mr. Addison, "out of the plans that are to be met with on the reverses of several old coins." We see also the *habits* and *dresses* of different persons in different ages. "Nor are they only charged with *things*, but with many ancient *customs*, as sacrifices, triumphs, congiaries, allocutions, decursions, lectisterniums, and a thousand other antiquated names and ceremonies that we should not have had so just a notion of, were they not still preserved on coins. Without the help of coins," as the same author pleasantly observes, "we should never have known which was the first of the emperors that wore a beard, or rode in stirrups*."

Old coins exhibit likewise the general *character* and *taste* of the several emperors. Thus we see Nero with a fiddle, and Commodus dressed in his lion's skin, though we are not to trust to coins for the characters of princes †. If so, Claudius would be as great a con-

* Dial. I. *Works*. iii. 19, 26.—*Ed.*

† "My ciceroni would discover a *Commodus* through the disguise of the club and lion's skin, and find out such an one to be *Livia*, that was dressed up like a *Ceres*." *Ibid.* p. 22.—*Ed.*

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queror as Julius Cæsar, and Domitian as good a man as Titus. For though the coinage at Rome was subject to the direction of the senate, there is no doubt but that in this, as in every thing else, they consulted the taste and pleasure of the emperors.

Several of these advantages medals possess in common with some monumental inscriptions. They also agree in this, that from medals and inscriptions only we can form any idea of the progress of the art and manner of *writing* in different nations and ages. Writing upon other materials could not be expected to be so durable. In fact, the oldest manuscripts are few, and modern, in comparison of thousands of coins and inscriptions.

Upon medals are preserved the entire forms of many ancient *edifices*, and probably the attitudes of famous *statues*, and copies of celebrated *paintings*, of which there are now no other remains, What confirms this conjecture is, that "the *Hercules Farnese*, the *Venus* of *Medicis*, the *Apollo* in the *Belvedera*, and the famous *Marcus Aurelius* on horseback, which are perhaps the four most beautiful statues extant, make their appearance all of them on ancient medals; though the figures that represent them were never thought to be the copies of statues, till the statues themselves were discovered *."

On the subject of the use of ancient medals, (though it be an use of them that has little relation to history,) I shall just mention the principal subject of Mr. Addison's ingenious treatise on medals: viz. that ancient medals and ancient poetry throw great light upon one another. He has there exhibited a variety of examples, in which the poet, and the artist who made the medal, have had the same *thought*, or copied from the very

* Addison, Dial. I. *Works*. iii. 25.—*Ed.*

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same common original; the very same thing being described in verse and expressed in sculpture. He has likewise presented us with a curious set of medals, which clear up several difficult passages in old authors; and he has produced many passages from the poets, which explain the reverses of several medals; so that the science of medals makes no inconsiderable figure in the *Belles Lettres.*

What the ancients made a secondary and subordinate use of their coins, modern European states have attended to as a primary and direct object. They have struck a variety of medals with no other view than to celebrate some illustrious person, or to perpetuate the knowledge of some memorable event. For modern medals do not pass current in payment as money; but at the same time that they answer this, their primary use, more completely, by containing more circumstances of a transaction, and being furnished with more precise dates; in every other respect they show a manifest want of judgement and true taste; and, but that it is impossible we should be deceived in the manners and customs of our own times, they might greatly mislead us in those respects.

With the method of coining, we have slavishly copied the manners, customs, habits, and even the religion of the ancients, with the same absurdity and in the same degree as we have done in our poetry. This, from the nature of things, must ever be the fate of all *imitations* that are not made immediately from nature. If we copy from other imitations, we shall always copy too much; an error to which the inventors of any art, who copy only from nature and real life, are not liable. For this reason every borrowed art will always betray its original. Thus, though in ancient medals we may trace all the variations of mode in

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dress, in the modern we cannot; all persons, without distinction, being commonly seen in a Roman habit. From the ancient medals we may form some idea of the customs and religion of the country in which they were struck; but we might conclude all the modern European states to be, in part at least, Heathen, from their medals. Had the Greeks and Romans been guilty of the same extravagance, we should not have found half the uses of their medals that we now do. "It is impossible to learn from the *French* medals, either the religion, customs, or habits of the *French* nation *."

With regard to *taste* in medals, the moderns, attending principally to their historical uses, have crowded them too much with inscriptions; sometimes, for want of room, putting a part of the legend upon the external edge of the piece; whereas the inscriptions upon most ancient medals are extremely concise and elegant. We even find entire copies of verses on some modern medals; and on others so absurd and extravagant a taste is shown, that the year of our Lord is distinguished by the letters in the inscription which denote it, being raised above the rest. Lastly, which is very remarkable, considering the great improvement of the arts in general; many of the ancient medals, as was hinted before, particularly those of the kings of Macedon, are said by the connoisseurs to exceed any thing of modern date in the beauty of their workmanship and the delicacy of expression. During the time of the early Roman Emperors, the medals had a more beautiful *relief* than the modern. But about the time of Constantine they became quite flat, as those of all European states, which imitated them, likewise were, till of late years. We likewise copied the Constantino-

* Addison. See his "Parallel between the ancient and modern Medals." Dial. III. *Works.* iii. 143.—*Ed.*

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politan coinage in England till about the reign of Henry VII., in drawing a full face; whereas all faces were drawn in profile (which is, on many accounts, far the most proper for a coin) till the end of the third century.

Considering the principal historical uses of medals, without entering into all the fanciful views of a *virtuoso*, intent upon completing his several suites, it will appear no paradox that the *value* of a medal is not to be estimated either from the size or the materials of it, but from what is curious in the head, the reverse, or the legend of it; from its rarity, from the fineness of its workmanship, or from the goodness of its preservation. Thus an Otho in silver is common and cheap; but an Otho in bronze is very scarce, and bears an immense price.

In modern times *coats of arms* have been made use of to distinguish families. They must therefore be of great use in tracing pedigrees, and consequently in ascertaining persons and events in history.

The origin of *armories* seems to be ascribed with the greatest probability to the ancient tournaments. Henry the Fowler, who regulated the tournaments in Germany, was the first who introduced these marks of honour. Coats of arms were then a kind of livery, composed of several bars, fillets, and colours, to distinguish the combatants, whose features could not be seen during the engagement. And those who had not been concerned in any tournaments had no arms, though they were gentlemen.

Such of the nobility and gentry as crossed the sea, in the expedition to the Holy Land, also assumed these tokens of honour to distinguish themselves.

Before those times we find nothing upon ancient tombs but crosses, with gothic inscriptions, and repre-

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sentations of the persons deceased. The tomb of pope Clement IV. who died in 1268, is the first whereon we find any *arms;* nor do they appear on any coin struck before the year 1336. We meet with figures, it is true, much more ancient, both in standards and on medals; but neither princes nor cities ever had arms in form, nor does any author make mention of *blazoning* before that time.

Originally, none but the nobility had the right of bearing arms. But Charles V. king of France, having ennobled the Parisians, by his charter, in 1371, permitted them to bear arms. From their example, the most eminent citizens of other places did the like.

Camden says the use of arms was not established till the reign of Henry III., and he instances in several of the most considerable families in England; whereas till that time the son always bore arms different from those of the father. About the same time it became the custom in England for private gentlemen to bear arms, borrowing them from the lords of whom they held in fee, or to whom they were the most devoted.

Arms at present are of the nature of *titles*, being both alike *hereditary*, and the marks for distinguishing families and kindred, as names are of persons and individuals.

All the methods of transmitting the knowledge of events to posterity which have hitherto been mentioned, being more simple and requiring less ability, would probably precede *histories* or narratives written upon light and portable materials; though these, no doubt, would be very short, plain, and devoid of ornament at first. The traces of facts left by the practice of preceding methods must also have been the only sources from which the first historians could derive their materials

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for the histories of times past. And since all nations and all arts approach to perfection by degrees, it is probable that traditional poems and monuments, with or without inscriptions, &c. would abound in those countries which produced the first historians.

LECTURE VII.

THE transition from public monuments to written histories may easily be conceived to have been gradual and almost insensible. For the first writings or records in an historical form, were not the work of private persons, who wrote either for their own reputation or the service of the public; but were made under the direction of some public magistrate; and, like the Capitoline tables, contained little more than a catalogue of the chief magistrates, and the bare mention of the principal events which happened under their administration. Such, probably, were the records of the archons of Athens, the catalogue of the priestesses of Juno Argiva; and not much more, probably, were the chronicles of the kings of Judah, Israel, and Persia, of which mention is made in the Scriptures.

Few attempts were made by private persons to compose history in the Greek language (in which the oldest writings now extant, except those of the Old Testament, are contained) before Herodotus, who is therefore styled *the father of history*, and who wrote about 450 years before Christ. History never contained any variety of interesting and curious particulars, nor received any of those graces and ornaments which render the study of it *liberal*, and engaging to the persons not concerned in the transactions it re-

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cords, till men of literature and leisure gave their time and abilities to the subject.

As but *few* transactions could be transmitted by all the methods in use for recording them before the writing of history, and as historians themselves afford no sufficient dates for measuring the intervals of past time without *chronology;* it will be useful, in order to form a general idea about what time the bulk of history begins to be worthy of credit, to give some account of the time when history began to be written, and chronology to be attended to, in some countries of principal note. In this I shall chiefly follow sir Isaac Newton.

"The Europeans had no chronology before the times of the Persian empire; and whatsoever chronology they now have of ancienter times hath been framed since, by reasoning and conjecture." What they call *the historical age* "wanted a good chronology for the first 60 or 70 olympiads*." And from such wandering people as were formerly in Europe, there could be no memory of things done three or four generations before the use of letters.

"Josephus tells us that Cadmus Milesius, and Acusilaus," the oldest historians among the Greeks, "were but a little before the expedition of the Persians against the Greeks.—Hellanicus, who was twelve years older than Herodotus, digested his history by the *ages*, or successions of the priestesses of *Juno Argiva*. Others digested theirs by those of the archons of Athens, or kings of the Lacedæmonians†." Herodotus himself uses no particular æra. Thucydides makes use of the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, which is the subject of his history, as an æra to which he refers all

* *Chronol.* p. 45.—*Ed.* † *Ibid.* pp. 46. 47.—*Ed.*

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the events he mentions. Ephorus, who brought his history to the twentieth year of Philip of Macedon, "digested things by *generations;* and the reckoning by the *olympiads*, or by any other *æra*, was not yet in use among the Greeks. The Arundelian marbles were composed sixty years after the death of Alexander the Great, and yet mention not the olympiads, nor any other standing æra, but reckon backward from the time then present.—In the next olympiad, Timæus Siculus wrote a history down to his own times, according to the olympiads.—Eratosthenes wrote above an hundred years after the death of Alexander the Great. He was followed by Apollodorus; and these two have been followed ever since by chronologers*."

As Cambyses destroyed all the records of Egypt, such as they were, we have no account of that people which can be depended upon, before their intercourse with the Greeks, from whom, indeed, is derived all that we know of them, and that was not before the time of Psammeticus, who began his reign in the year 661 before Christ. This we learn from Herodotus, who, when he is speaking of those Grecians who had helped to set Psammeticus on the throne of Egypt, says that the Ionians and Carians continued for a long time to inhabit those parts which lay near the sea, below the city of Bubastis, in the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, till in succeeding times Amasis king of Egypt caused them to abandon their habitations, and settle at Memphis, to defend him against the Egyptians. But from the time of their establishment, he says, they had so constant a communication with the Greeks, that one may justly say we know all things that passed in Egypt from the reign of Psammeticus to our age.

"As for the chronology of the Latins, that is still

* Newton's *Chronol.* pp. 47, 48.—*Ed.*

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more uncertain," than that of the Greeks. "Plutarch represents great uncertainties in the originals of Rome; and so doth Servius. The old records of the Latins were burnt by the Gauls, 120 years after the Regifuge, and 164 years before the death of Alexander the Great: and Quintus Fabius Pictor, the oldest historian of the Latins, lived an hundred years later than that king, and took almost all things from Diocles Peparethius, a Greek*."

"When the Greeks and Latins were forming their technical chronology, there were great disputes about the antiquity of Rome. The Greeks made it much older than the Olympiads. Some of them said it was built by Æneas; others by Romus, the son or grandson of Æneas; others by Romus the son or grandson of Latinus, king of the Aborigines; others by Romus the son of Ulysses, or of Ascanius, or of Italus; and some of the Latins at first fell in with the opinion of the Greeks, saying that it was built by Romulus, the son or grandson of Æneas. Timæus Siculus represented it built by Romulus the grandson of Æneas, above an hundred years before the Olympiads, and so did Nævius the poet, who was twenty years older than Ennius, served in the first Punic war, and wrote a history of that war. Hitherto nothing certain was agreed upon; but about 140 or 150 years after the death of Alexander the Great, they began to say that Rome was built a second time by Romulus, in the fifteenth age after the destruction of Troy. By *ages*, they meant reigns of the kings of the Latins at Alba†."

"Scythia beyond the Danube had no letters, till Ulphilas their bishop formed them; which was about 600 years after the death of Alexander the Great; and Germany had none till it received them from the western

* Newton's *Chronol.* p. 49.—*Ed.* † *Ibid.* pp. 128, 129.—*Ed.*

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empire of the Latins, about 700 years after the death of that king. The Huns had none in the days of Procopius, who flourished 850 years after the death of that king; and Sweden and Norway received them still later *."

With regard to our own country, the Romans are the first nation from whom we learn any account of ourselves, and we had no writers of our own till the planting of christianity, in the time of the Saxon heptarchy. But from this time the church and the cloisters furnished a constant succession till the Reformation; after which, and the revival of letters in the west, there can be no complaint of want of writers of any kind, or party. And as to the bulk of modern history in general, and indeed a great part of what is now called ancient too; lord Bolingbroke justly observes, that "since ancient memorials have been so critically examined, and modern memorials have been so multiplied, it contains such a probable series of events, easily distinguishable from the improbable, as force the assent of every man who is in his senses, and are therefore sufficient to answer all the purposes of the study of history †."

It may not be amiss to close this account of *historians* properly so called, with observing, that, of ancient historians, a contemporary writer is to be preferred; but that among the moderns, a later writer is almost universally preferable. The ancients we credit in proportion to the merit of their *evidence* for what they relate. The moderns we chiefly regard according to their accuracy and diligence in comparing and ascertaining the evidence they can collect from others. The difference is founded on this consideration, that for want of memorials of ancient transactions, the more time has elapsed after they happened, the more du-

* Newton's *Chronol.* pp. 49, 50.—*Ed.* † Letter IV. 1752. p. 112.—*Ed.*

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bious the history grows. Whereas in modern times, every event of consequence is instantly committed to writing, in some form or other, by a thousand hands. These are brought to light only by degrees; and considering that no person, or those immediately connected with him, can know the whole of any very complex transaction, and moreover that no person who writes the history of his own times can escape the influence of prejudice, for or against particular persons and schemes; a later writer, who views things with more coolness, and has a greater variety of materials to compare, has certainly a great advantage over any that went before him.

Our own history, till the Reformation, there can be no doubt is far better understood this century than it was the last; and every year brings us acquainted with some new memoir concerning the transactions of the middle of that, and the beginning of the present century. Nay, so much weight is due to this consideration, that we hardly need scruple to say, notwithstanding the loss of many valuable histories, that we have almost as perfect a knowledge of the most important events of several periods even in the classical history, as the generality of the Greeks and Romans who lived in those periods could attain to. However, with regard to modern times, a contemporary writer, were he entirely free from prejudice, writes under great disadvantages, in point of *intelligence* only, in comparison with one who comes after him; who, with inferior qualifications, will easily be able to supply his deficiences, if not correct his mistakes. And it can only be with respect to times in which there is a great scarcity of materials, and where those have been transmitted through the hands of several dependent evidences, that a contrary rule is to be observed.

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LECTURE VIII.

THE methods of recording events which have hitherto been mentioned, may be termed *direct*, because they were contrived, and made use of, for that purpose; and the notices of past events with which they furnish us, are the most copious source of History in after ages. But there is a variety of other methods in which the knowledge of events, and of the situation of things in times past, is communicated to us *indirectly*; as from many circumstances, which do not at all partake of the nature of *records*, persons of sagacity and attention will be able to form an idea of the state of things, and to distinguish the intervals of time, in past ages. I shall mention a few of these, in order to give you some idea what a variety of things an accurate historian must attend to, and from what unexpected quarters he may sometimes receive the greatest light and information.

In the first place, it will easily be apprehended that, in order to form a complete idea of characters and events which occur in any period of history, we are not to confine ourselves to books professedly historical. For so extensive is the connexion of things with one another, that every thing written or done, in any period of time, is necessarily related, in a thousand ways, to many other things that were transacted at the same time; and therefore cannot help bearing some marks and traces of those related particulars; and by these a person of sagacity will be led to the knowledge of more things than he who transmitted the accounts of them intended to signify. For this reason, to form as complete an idea as possible of the state of things in any period of past time, we must carefully study all the remains of that time, how foreign soever they may at first

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sight appear to be to our main purpose. In this sense, even poets and orators may be considered as historians, and every law and custom as a piece of history.

To so great perfection are men arrived in distinguishing things that have any real connexion, that the age of almost every writing that remains of ancient times is determined with great exactness. Indeed, a writer who has no particular design to conceal the time in which he writes, can hardly avoid introducing (in one manner or other) the mention of such particulars as will direct to it; or if he intend to impose upon the world, it is a thousand to one but, if nothing else, his *language* and *style* betray him. These are things which are perfectly mechanical, and least of all at a person's command; or, however, what few persons ever think of disguising.

There is no doubt, in particular, but that all the pieces which *Annius* of *Viterbo** endeavoured to palm upon the world as ancient writings, have been exposed; the innumerable fabulous legends about our Saviour, the apostles, and many of the popish saints, which long passed current, are now no longer regarded; and the famous *Decretals*, of which the popes availed themselves so much in dark ages, are now acknowledged to be forgeries, even by the catholics themselves †, while the real productions of antiquity stand their ground the firmer from these critical examinations; and all the arguments of pere Harduin ‡ (who from seeing numberless forgeries, was led to suspect forgery every

* A Dominican, who died in 1502, aged 70. He published 17 Books of Antiquities, pretended to be remains of Xenophon and other ancient authors.—*Ed.*

† See Mosheim's *Eccl. Hist.* Cent. ix. part ii. ch. ii. 1768. ii. 126.—*Ed.*

‡ A French Jesuit, who died in 1729, aged 83. He maintained that all the ancient writings, except the Works of Cicero, the Natural History of Pliny, the Satires and Epistles of Horace, and Virgil's Georgics, had been forged by the monks. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1789. iv. 351.—*Ed.*

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where) has not probably been able to make one genuine classic author suspected.

A few examples will more clearly show what use an attentive historian may make of books not properly historical. No historian now extant, or probably that ever was extant, will give a person so much insight into the real characters and views of those great men who distinguished themselves in the time of Cicero, as he may get from that collection of letters between Cicero and his friends, which pass under his name, and particularly from his correspondence with Atticus. These letters, indeed, are written with so few interruptions, and with so much freedom, that they contain a pretty regular and very faithful history of the most active and critical part of his life. They show us, at least, in what light Cicero himself, who was a principal actor in that important period, viewed the characters and events of his time. And private *diaries* and letters, written by persons who were the chief actors on the theatre of European politics in the last century, are daily coming to light, and supplying great defects in all our historians.

Sir Isaac Newton, from two passages in the poems of Theognis of Megara, collects both the age of that writer and the situation of the Greeks in his time. That poet exhorts his companions to be unanimous, and to drink and be merry, without fear of the Medes; and he says that "discord had destroyed Magnesia, Colophon, and Smyrna, cities of Ionia and Phrygia, and would destroy the Greeks*." From these circumstances he infers, that in the time of this author, Cyrus had conquered those cities of the Greeks in Asia, that the states of Greece in Europe were under great apprehension of being invaded, and that the Persians

* *Chronol.* pp. 321, 322.—*Ed.*

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had not then assumed the superiority over the Medes, which they afterwards did.

The *language* of a people is a great guide to an historian, both in tracing their origin, and in discovering the state of many other important circumstances relating to them. Of all customs and habits, that of *speech*, being the most frequently exercised, is the most confirmed, and least liable to change. Colonies, therefore, will always speak the language of their mother-country, unless some event produce a freer intercourse with people who speak another language; and even the proportion of that foreign intercourse may in some measure be estimated by the *degree* of the corruption of the language. A few facts will clearly explain these positions.

The considerable change which the Hebrew language underwent at the time of the Babylonish captivity would be sufficient to inform us, without the aid of any other circumstance, that few of the old inhabitants remained in the country, and that those who were carried away captive were either much separated from one another, or did not return in great numbers. The few and inconsiderable remains of the British language in the present English, demonstrate beyond all contradiction, the havock that was made of the Britons by our Saxon ancestors, amounting almost to a total extirpation and expulsion. And the Saxon language spoken in the lowlands of Scotland, is a greater proof that they were some time or other conquered by the Saxons, than the imperfect and fabulous annals of the Scotch historians are of the contrary.

But the use of language to an historian is by no means confined to discover the origin of a nation, or the greater revolutions that have befallen it. Language takes a tincture from the civil policy, the man-

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ners, customs, employment, and taste, of the nation that uses it, by means of which a person well versed in the theory of language will be able to make many curious discoveries. An example or two will make this observation also pretty plain.

It has been observed that the frequent allusions to military affairs, or concealed metaphors borrowed from the art or practice of war in the common forms of speech in the Roman tongue (such as *intervallum*, a term signifying *distance* simply, though borrowed from fortification), and many others of the like nature, clearly inform us that the Romans were a people originally addicted to war. Like traces of a pastoral life, and the business of husbandry, are found in the Hebrew language, which is therefore equally characteristic of the genius and manner of life of that people. And if we only consider that all people must be under the greatest necessity of inventing terms to express the ideas of things about which they are the most early and the most frequently conversant, and that these terms, preferably to others, are universally transferred to things analogous to them (because most allusions will necessarily be made to things of the most frequent occurrence), this method of tracing the original genius, manners, and employment of a nation, subtle as at first sight it may appear, will easily be perceived to have a foundation in nature; and we may see, that, were a language thoroughly examined in this view, many clear and unquestionable conclusions of this kind might be drawn from it.

It is observable that the word in the Hebrew which signifies a *stranger*, is derived from another word which signifies to *fear*, and that *hostis* in Latin originally signified both a *stranger* and an *enemy*. Are not both these circumstances plain indications, that in the times

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when those languages were formed, there was little intercourse between different nations, and that travelling was very hazardous?

From the following curious observation on the nature and progress of language, Mr. Hume, with great ingenuity, and appearance of reason, argues that population was little encouraged by the Romans among their slaves. "It is an universal observation, which we may form upon language, that, where two related parts of *a whole* bear any proportion to each other, in numbers, rank, or consideration, there are always *correlative terms* invented, which answer to both the parts, and express their mutual relation. If they bear no proportion to each other, the term is only invented for the less, and marks its distinction from the whole. Thus *man* and *woman*, *master* and *servant*, *father* and *son*, *prince* and *subject*, *stranger* and *citizen*, are correlative terms*," in all languages, indicating that each part signified by them bears a considerable proportion to the other, that both are frequently mentioned in opposition to one another, and are often compared together. But *verna*, the Latin name for a *slave born in the family*, has no correlative; which clearly indicates that that species of slaves bore no sensible proportion to the rest, and would not bear to be compared with them†.

By the same method of reasoning, we infer that the military part of ancient Rome bore a greater proportion to the husbandmen than they do among us, because with them the terms *miles* and *paganus* were correlative; and that the *priests* of Rome were never considered as a part of the community distinct from the

* *Essays.* xi. 1777. i. 555.—*Ed.*
† *Ibid.* pp. 407, 556.—*Ed.*

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rest, because there is not in Latin any term to denote the *laity*, in opposition to the *clergy*, as there is in all christian countries *.

It may just be mentioned in this place, that copiousness and refinement in language always keep pace with improvements in the arts and conveniencies of life, and with the progress of science in a country. Discoveries of other kinds, made by the medium of language, might be mentioned; but these are sufficient to show of what importance the study of language may be to a person who would get a thorough insight into the history, the genius, and the manners of a people.

LECTURE IX.

THE *laws* of a country are necessarily connected with every thing belonging to the people of it; so that a thorough knowledge of *them*, and of their progress, would inform us of every thing that was most useful to be known about them; and one of the greatest imperfections of historians in general is owing to their ignorance of law. Indeed, hardly any person, except a native, can come at an intimate knowledge of the laws of any country. But it is greatly to be lamented that things so nearly connected as *law* and *history* should have been so seldom joined. For though the history of battles and state intrigues be more engaging to the bulk of readers, who have no relish for any thing but what interests the *passions*; from the knowledge of the progress of laws and changes of constitution in a state, a politician may derive more useful information, and a philosopher more rational entertainment, than

*. *Essays*. xi. 1777. i. 555.—*Ed.*

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from any other object he can attend to. I shall mention a few particulars, by way of illustration of what I have now advanced.

As every new law is made to remove some inconvenience the state was subject to before the making of it, and for which no other method of redress was effectual, the law itself is a standing, and the most authentic, evidence we can require of the state of things previous to it. Indeed, from the time that laws began to be written in some regular form, the preamble to each of them is often an historical account of the evil intended to be remedied by it, as is the case with many of our statutes. But a sagacious historian has little occasion for any preamble to laws. They speak sufficiently plain of themselves.

When we read that a law was made by Clothaire king of France, that no person should be condemned without being heard, do we need being told that before the time of the enacting that law the administration of justice was very irregular in that country, and that a man could have little security for his liberty, property, or life? Is it not a proof that the spirit of hospitality began to decline among the Burgundians as they grew more civilised, when there was occasion for a law to punish any Burgundian who should show a stranger to the house of a Roman, instead of entertaining him himself?

It is but an unfavourable idea that we form of the state of paternal and filial affection among the Romans, from the tenor of their laws, which show an extreme anxiety to restrain parents from doing injustice to their own children. Children (say their laws) are not to be disinherited without just cause, chiefly that of ingratitude; the cause must be set forth in the testament; it must be tried by the judge, and verified by witnesses,

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if denied. Whereas among other nations, natural affection, without the aid of law, is a sufficient motive with parents to do no injustice to their children. A knowledge of another part of the political constitution of the Romans will probably help us to a reason for the uncommon defect of natural affection among them. The *patria potestas* was in reality the power of a master over a slave, the very knowledge and idea of which, though it were not often exercised, was enough to produce severity in parents, and fear and diffidence in children, which must destroy mutual confidence and affection.

Customs, and general maxims of conduct, being of the nature of unwritten laws, give us the same insight into the state of things in a country. The high esteem in which hospitality is held by the Arabs, and the religious and even superstitious practice of it by them, and by other savage nations, shows the great want there is of that virtue in those countries, and that travelling is particularly dangerous in them.

The laws and customs of a country show clearly what was the manner of living and the occupation of the original inhabitants of it. Thus, where we find that the eldest sons succeed to the whole, or the greatest part of the estate, we may be sure that we see traces of feudal notions, of a military life, and a monarchical government, in which a prince is better served by one powerful vassal than by several weak ones. Where the children succeed equally, it is a mark of a state having been addicted to husbandry, and inclined to a popular equal government. And where the youngest succeeds, we may take it for granted that the people formerly lived a pastoral and roving life, in which it is natural for the oldest to be provided for, and disposed of, the first, and the youngest to take what is left; a

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manner of life which requires, and admits of, little or no regular government.

The change of manners, and way of living, may be traced in the changes of the laws. Thus the change from a military to a commercial state may be traced in England by the progress of our laws, particularly those relating to the alienation of landed property; a thing absolutely inconsistent with strict feudal notions, and for a long time impracticable in this country; but which took place by degrees, as the interests of commerce were perceived to require that every thing valuable should circulate as freely as possible in a state. It must however be considered, that the change of laws does not keep an equal pace with the change of manners, but follows sometimes far behind. In almost every case, the reason and necessity of the thing first introduce a change in the *practice*, before the authority of *law* confirms and authorises it. This too is easy to be traced in many of our English laws, and particularly those which relate to the easy transferring of landed property, for the purpose of trade and commerce.

Without entering into particular laws, we may observe of the state of laws in general, as was observed with regard to language, that copiousness and refinement in them, and even intricacy and tediousness in the administration of them, is an indication of freedom, and of improvements in civilised life; and that few laws, and an expeditious administration, are marks either of the connexions of persons being very few, and little involved, (which is a necessary consequence of improvements,) that the rights of persons have not been attended to, and that the nation is but little advanced in the knowledge or possession of those things on which their happiness and security chiefly depend;

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or that too arbitrary a power is lodged in some hands or other; it being well observed by Montesquieu, that the tediousness and expense of law-suits is the price of liberty. It is very possible, however, that both the laws of a country, and the administration of them, may be rendered much less complex than they are with us, without any diminution of general liberty; and but little benefit can accrue from laws, when it is either impossible to know what they are, or when the expense of having recourse to them is greater than can be afforded.

To make you sensible with what attention laws should be considered, and how many distinct circumstances a person of sagacity may learn from them; I shall quote the observations which lord chief justice Hale makes upon a law of king Canute, which is as follows in Lambard's collection: *Sive quis incuriâ, sive morte repentinâ fuerit intestato mortuus, dominus tamen nullam rerum suarum partem, præter eam quæ jure debetur hereoti nomine, sibi assumito; verum eas, judicio suo, uxori, liberis, et cognatione proximis, juste, pro suo cuique jure, distribuito* *. "If any person dying by accident, or suddenly, shall be intestate, let not the lord take any part of his goods, except what may be due to him as a *heriot*; but let him, using his best judgement, distribute them to his wife, children, and nearest relations, according to their respective claims."

* And ȝif hpa cpẏdeleaſe of ðiſſum life ȝepite. ſẏ hẏt ðuſh hiſ ȝẏmeleaſte. ſẏ hit ðuſh ſeaſlicne deaþ. ðoñe ne teo ſe hlaſoſde nà maſe on hiſ æhte. butan hiſ ſihte heſeȝeate; Ac beo be hiſ dihte ſeo æhte ȝeſcẏft ſpiþe ſihte. piſe. ⁊ cildan. ⁊ neh maȝon. ælcum be þæſ mæþe ðe him to ȝebẏſiȝe.—Lambard, Αρχαιονομια, 4to. 1568, fol. 119.

There is another Latin version, though substantially the same, among the *Leges Cnuti*, 68 "De intestato mortuis," in Wilkin's *Leges Anglo-Saxonicæ*, 1721. p. 144.—*Ed.*

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Upon this he observes five things, 1. That in those times the wife had a share as well of the lands, as of the goods, for her dower: 2. That in reference to hereditary successions, there seemed to be little difference between lands and goods: for this law makes no distinction: 3. That there was a kind of settled right of succession with reference to proximity and remoteness of blood or kin: 4. That with respect to children, they all seemed to succeed alike without any distinction between males and females: 5. That the ancestor, however, might dispose of his lands, as well as goods, by will.

LECTURE X.

MANY observations on the common course of human life will enable us to determine the intervals of time within which events connected with them have happened. Those of which the most use has been made are observations on *generations of men*, and *successions of kings*. For instance, when we read in history, or collect from circumstances, that a certain number of generations intervened between any two events, or that a certain number of kings reigned in the interval, we shall be able to fix the date of the former with respect to the latter, if we have carefully observed (from comparing a sufficient number of facts) what has been the mean length of a generation, and the mean length of a reign; or at what age men, taken one with another, have had children, and how long kings, in general, have actually reigned.

The use of these mediums of proof has been acknowledged from the earliest writing of history; and indeed, so obvious is the thought, that the chronology of all the ancient times of the Grecian history was adjust-

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ed by their oldest writers upon these principles alone. The misfortune is, that they took their mean length of a *generation*, and also that of a *succession*, from mere random and fanciful conjectures, and not from a careful observation of facts. But it is happy, that though these writers have fixed the chronology of ancient times by a fallacious theory, a sufficient number of the *facts*, to which their theory ought to have corresponded, still remains; by means of which it is easy to reform their theory, and rectify their chronology. Indeed, it is a happy circumstance, that every theory drawn from the situation of things in *human life*, is always open to confutation or correction, while the course of human life remains the same. It is but observing how things really are, and whether the theory in question actually correspond to it, or not.

It is upon these principles chiefly that sir Isaac Newton has undertaken to rectify the chronology of ancient states and kingdoms; and for examples to these observations, I shall lay before you the evidence on which his admirable theory rests*. In order to this, I shall state the principal of those facts the chronology of which has been so variously represented; showing how incompatible with the course of nature are the dates that have formerly been assigned to them, and which passed without examination till the time of this great author, and upon what principles he has reduced their extravagant chronology within the bounds of nature and probability.

In order to have a clearer idea of the connexion of his proofs, I must observe that the great events, the

* The *theory* of sir Isaac Newton, immediately on its publication, encountered a powerful opposition from a learned and acute French philosopher. See the 4 volumes entitled *Chronologie De Newton* in *Œuvres Completes de* Fréret, vii.—x. A Paris, 1796.—*Ed.*

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intervals of which he endeavours to ascertain, succeeded each other in the following order:

The Argonautic expedition.
The siege of Troy.
The return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus.
The first Messenian war.
The expedition of Xerxes.
The Peloponnesian war *.

Between the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus and the battle of Thermopylæ (of the time of which there is no controversy), there reigned, of one race, the following kings of Lacedæmon; Eurysthenes, Agis, Echestratus, Labotas, Doryagus, Agesilaus, Archelaus, Teleclus, Alcamenes, Polydorus, Eurycrates, Anaxander, Eurycrates II., Leon, Anaxandrides †, Cleomenes, and Leonidas,—17 in all; and along with these was a succession of 17 also in the other race. In this interval, therefore, we have a double succession of 17 kings. Now, by comparing the chronology of almost all the successions which have been perfectly ascertained, sir Isaac Newton finds that kings have reigned, one with another, 18 or 20 years apiece; and if in any case they have exceeded that number of years, it was not in such unsettled times as were those of the Grecian monarchies.

The 17 princes therefore, according to this computation, allowing them 20 years apiece, which is quite as much as the nature of things will admit of, must have reigned 340 years. These, counted backwards from the sixth year of Xerxes, and allowing 1 or 2 years more for the war of the Heraclidæ, and the reign of Aristodemus, the father of Eurysthenes and Proclus, will

* See Newton's *Chronol.* pp. 26, 29, 33, 37, 41.—*Ed.*
† *Ibid.* pp. 51, 52.—*Ed.*

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place the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus 159 years after the death of Solomon, and 46 before the first Olympiad in which Chorœbus was victor. But Timæus and his followers have taken the reigns of kings for generations, and reckoned 3 generations to 100, and sometimes to 120 years; and so have assigned 35 or 40 years to each king, and accordingly have placed the return of the Heraclidæ 280 years earlier than the nature of things can possibly admit.

Other facts, with which we are furnished by these very chronologers and other ancient writers, enable us to confirm the truth of the preceding interval of time by a different medium of proof. If we consider the course of descent in a sufficient number of families, we shall find that the interval from father to son is, one with another, 33 or 34 years apiece, and that the intervals between the eldest sons and chiefs of families (such as are most taken notice of by historians), are not more than 28 or 30 years, one with another.

The reason why a longer interval is assigned to *generations of men* than to *successions of kings*, is because kings are succeeded not only by their sons, but sometimes by their brothers; and sometimes they are slain or deposed, and are succeeded by others of an equal age, or even a greater age than themselves, and especially in elective or turbulent kingdoms.

Admitting the above to be the mean length of generations, if we multiply the number of generations which intervened between any two events by 33 or 34 for generations in general, and by 28 or 30 for generations by the eldest sons, we shall probably determine the interval with tolerable exactness: and when conclusions from this method of computation coincide with those from the other by successions of kings, they cannot but

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be allowed to confirm one another. This we are able to do with respect to the greater part of the preceding interval.

From the return of the Heraclidæ to the beginning of the first Messenian war, there reigned 10 kings of Sparta in one race, 9 in the other, 10 of Messene, and 9 of Arcadia. These successions, if reduced to the course of nature, in the method directed above, will scarce take up 180 or 190 years; whereas, according to chronologers in general, they took up a space of 379 years. But that 180 or 190 years is the most probable interval, appears by an argument drawn from a course of generations during the very same period.

Euryleon the son of Æugeus commanded the main body of the Messenians in the fifth year of the first Messenian war, and he was in the fifth generation from Oiolochus the son of Theras, brother-in-law of Aristodemus, and tutor to his sons Eurysthenes and Proclus, as Pausanias relates. Consequently, from the return of the Heraclidæ, which was in the days of Theras, to the battle, which was in the fifth year of this war, there were 6 generations, which being (as is most probable) chiefly by the eldest sons, will scarce exceed 30 years to a generation, and so may amount to 170 or 180 years. That war lasted 19 or 20 years, of which add the last 15 years to the 5 mentioned before, and there will be about 190 years to the end of that war; the very length of the same interval, as determined by the preceding observations on the successions of kings. But the followers of Timæus, by making this interval about 379 years, must allow above 60 years to a generation, which can by no means be supposed.

To illustrate more at large the method of arguing from generations, and at the same time to proceed a little further in giving the outlines of this author's

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great reformation in ancient chronology, I shall relate two other courses of generations, which fix the time of the Argonautic expedition, an event which is the grand hinge on which all the chronology of ancient Greece turns, and the date of which, as determined by generations, you will presently see confirmed by another method of investigation on very different principles.

One of these courses of generations extends backwards from the return of the Heraclidæ, where our last course began, to the expedition; and the other from the Peloponnesian war to the same event. Hercules the Argonaut was the father of Hillus, the father of Cleodeus, the father of Aristomachus, the father of Temenus, Cresphontes, and Aristodemus, who led the Heraclidæ into Peloponnesus; whence their return was 4 generations later than the Argonautic expedition; and these generations were short ones, being by the chief of the family. Count therefore 80 years backward, from the return of the Heraclidæ to the Trojan war, and the taking of Troy will be about 76 years after the death of Solomon; and the Argonautic expedition, which was one generation earlier, will be about 43 years after it.

Æsculapius and Hercules were Argonauts, and Hippocrates was the eighteenth inclusively, by the father's side, from Æsculapius, and the nineteenth from Hercules by the mother's side; and because these generations, being taken notice of by writers, were most probably by the principal of the family, and so for the most part by the eldest sons, we may reckon about 28, or at the most about 30 years to a generation; and thus the 17 intervals by the father's side, and the 18 by the mother's, at a middle reckoning, amount to above 507 years; which, counted backwards from the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, at which time Hippo-

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crates began to flourish, will reach up to the forty-third year after the death of Solomon, and there place the Argonautic expedition; the very year in which we were led to place it by following the former course of generations.

The same great author ascertains this, and several other capital events in the Grecian history, by such a variety of independent arguments, drawn from the same and different mediums, all so agreeable to the present course of nature, that it seems impossible for a person who pays a sufficient regard to it not to be determined by them. It is surprising, indeed, that the manifest inconsistencies of the commonly received chronology with the course of nature should not have prevented the establishment of it; and it is absolutely unaccountable, but upon the willingness of all men to admit of any hypothesis which tends to give dignity to their nations and families, by adding to the antiquity of them. But must it not be a more unaccountable attachment to established hypotheses, which can induce any persons of the present age, after these inconsistencies have been so clearly pointed out, still to adhere to a chronology, which in those turbulent unsettled times supposes kings to have reigned, one with another, in some successions 35, in some 38, in some 40, in some 42, in some 44, and in some 46 years apiece; and which generally allows about 60 years to a generation, and in one instance 85?

With respect to the chronology of the kings of Rome, Mr. Hooke has shown* by several independent arguments, drawn from the connexion of events in the history of their reigns, that to suppose them to have reigned, one with another, 19 or 20 years, makes a more consistent series of facts, than to imagine them to have

* In a Dissertation annexed to his *History*, book i.—*Ed.*

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reigned 35 years apiece, which is the common hypothesis.

The chief inconveniences attending the old chronology in the Roman history are, that it supposes an interval of 63 years of peace in that restless nation, before the accession of Tullus Hostilius. It makes the reign of Servius Tullius so long in proportion to the few censuses, which (according to the most authentic records) were taken in his reign, as would argue a most unaccountable neglect of his own favourite institution. It obliges us to suppose Tarquinius Superbus not to have been the son of Tarquinius Priscus, Dido not to have been contemporary with Æneas, or Numa with Pythagoras, as well as Solon with Crœsus in the Grecian history; all which have the unanimous voice of all tradition in their favour, and which Dionysius Halicarnassensis, Livy, and Plutarch, express their extreme unwillingness to give up, but that they were compelled to it by a regard to a chronology which in their times was unquestioned. Indeed, the congress of Solon and Crœsus, Plutarch * expresses his determination not to give up, notwithstanding his general attachment to a theory which would not admit of it, and the fallacy of which he did not suspect. His words are so remarkable, and show so clearly on how precarious a footing that chronology stands, that I shall recite them: "The congress of Solon with Crœsus, some think they can confute by chronology. But a history so illustrious, verified by so many witnesses, and, which is more, so agreeable to the manner of Solon, and worthy of the greatness of his mind and of his wisdom, I cannot persuade myself to reject because of some chronological canons, as they call them; which an hundred authors correcting, have not been able to con-

* In *Vit. Solon.* ad fin.—*Ed.*

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stitute any thing certain, and have not been able to agree amongst themselves about repugnances."

Besides, to return to the Roman history; if the number of kings that reigned at Alba be joined to those who reigned at Rome, and they be allowed to have reigned 19 or 20 years apiece, they will place the coming of Æneas into Italy, and the siege of Troy, exactly in the time in which arguments drawn from generations and successions in Greece, as well as astronomical calculations (as will hereafter appear), place that event, which is a reciprocal confirmation of the just correction both of the Greek and Latin chronology. For from Latinus to Numitor are 16 kings, who reigned at Alba; Romulus was contemporary with Numitor, and after him Dionysius and other historians reckon 6 kings more at Rome to the beginning of the consuls. Now these 22 reigns, at about 18 years to a reign one with another (for many of these kings were slain), took up 396 years, which counted back from the consulship of J. Brutus and Valerius Poplicola, the two first consuls, place the Trojan war 78 years after the death of Solomon.

This computation likewise agrees with what Appian in his history of the Punic wars relates, out of the archives of Carthage, which came into the hands of the Romans, viz. that Carthage stood 700 years. This is a round number, but Solinus adds the odd years when he says, *Carthago post annos* 737 *quam fuerat extructa exciditur*, which places Dido, the founder of Carthage, about 76 years after the death of Solomon. It likewise agrees with the Arundelian Marbles, which say that Teucer came to Cyprus 7 years after the destruction of Troy, and built Salamis, in the days of Dido. Indeed, it is an argument greatly in favour of Newton's computations, that they agree very nearly with all the most an-

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cient *monuments*, the most current *traditions* of antiquity, and the *oldest historians*; particularly Herodotus and Thucydides, who wrote before chronology was corrupted by the vanity of their nation, or the absurd systems of later historians.

It is an argument greatly in favour of the credibility of the Old Testament history, that the courses of generations and descents which are mentioned in it, parallel to those in the fabulous period of the Grecian history, fall within the same intervals of time with those which have been measured since history has been authentic. Consequently, it is another argument in favour of Newton's correction of the ancient Greek chronology, that it brings the courses of generations and successions in the one, to correspond to those in the other. Besides, in several other respects it brings them to a greater harmony than can be made out upon any other principles. Particularly it places the expedition of Sesostris (who as it is highly probable from several circumstances was the same person with Sesac) in the very time in which it is spoken of in the Scriptures.

LECTURE XI.

Of all the incidental circumstances by which ancient writers enable us, in an *indirect* manner, to ascertain the time of events, none give occasion to more clear and undeniable conclusions than the mention they make of *celestial appearances*, on account of the regularity and constancy of the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and because the laws of their motions are so exactly known to us. In this respect, much are modern chronologers and historians obliged to the superstition

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with which the ancients regarded unusual appearances in the heavens. It was their imagined portentous nature that first drew upon them the attention of mankind, who dreaded their unknown influences and effects. It was on this account, and not because they were considered as proper subjects of philosophical inquiry, or of any use in chronology, that they have engaged the notice of historians. And fortunately for us, the catalogue of ancient eclipses, not observed by philosophers, but gazed at by the superstitious vulgar, is pretty full. Along with the history of many remarkable revolutions and critical situations in the history of states, the eclipses which preceded or accompanied them are faithfully transmitted to us; and where the time, the place, and quantity of an eclipse are mentioned, though not with astronomical exactness, it is very easy, by the rules of calculation, to fix the very year and day when the event happened. For considering the prodigious variety which the three circumstances of *time*, *place*, and *quantity* occasion in the appearance of eclipses, there is no room to suspect that any two happening within a moderate distance of one another, can be in the least danger of being confounded.

For the entertainment of those who take pleasure in calculations of this kind, I shall just quote from Mr. Ferguson's *Astronomy*, some of the principal eclipses that have been taken notice of by historians, that you may verify them at your leisure.

"Before Christ 585, May 28, an eclipse of the sun, foretold by Thales, by which a peace was brought about between the Medes and Lydians.

"B. C. 523, July 16, an eclipse of the moon, which was followed by the death of Cambyses.

"B. C. 481, April 19, an eclipse of the sun, on the sailing of Xerxes from Sardis.

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"B. C. 468, April 30, an eclipse of the sun. The Persian war, and the falling off of the Persians from the Egyptians.

"B. C. 431, August 3, a total eclipse of the sun. A comet and plague at Athens.

"B. C. 413, August 27, a total eclipse of the moon. Nicias with his ship destroyed at Syracuse.

"B. C. 394, August 14, an eclipse of the sun. The Persians beat by Conon in a sea engagement.

"B. C. 168, June 21, a total eclipse of the moon. The next day Perseus king of Macedonia was conquered by Paulus Æmilius.

"A. C. 59, April 30, an eclipse of the sun. This is reckoned among the prodigies, on account of the death of Agrippinus, by Nero.

"A. C. 306, July 27, an eclipse of the sun. The stars were seen, and the emperor Constantius died.

"A. C. 840, May 4, a dreadful eclipse of the sun. And Louis the Pious died within six months after it.

"A. C. 1009, an eclipse of the sun. And Jerusalem taken by the Saracens*."

To exemplify the use of eclipses for the purposes of chronology, I shall select from the above mentioned, one of the moon, and show how the date of the event which accompanied it is ascertained by the help of it.

The eclipse of the moon, which I shall select, and the circumstances attending it, are thus related by Thucydides†. "Upon the arrival of Gylippus to the assistance of the Syracusans, the Athenians, finding they were no match for the united force of their enemies, repented that they had not quitted their situation (in which it was no longer safe for them to continue) before, and immediately came to a resolution to sail out of the

* See Ferguson's *Astronomy*. 1756. pp. 179, 180.—*Ed.*

† Lib. vii. Sect. 50.—*Ed.*

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harbour as secretly as possible. But when every thing was ready for sailing, the moon was eclipsed, for it was then full moon. Upon this, most of the Athenians, alarmed at the omen, desired their commanders to proceed no further; and Nicias, being himself a superstitious observer of such prodigies, declared that he would not come to any final resolution about quitting the place till they had staid 3 days longer, according to the advice of the soothsayers. This occasioned the Athenians to stay in the place, which they had never after an opportunity of leaving, and in which they almost to a man perished."

This event is placed by historians in the year B. C. 413; and upon looking into the astronomical tables, it appears that the moon was at the full about midnight at London, or one o'clock in the morning at Syracuse, on the 27th of August in that year; when the sun was only 4 degrees 48 minutes from the node, far within 12 degrees, the limit of lunar eclipses; and when, consequently, there must have been a total eclipse of the moon, which would be visible to the Athenians from the beginning to the end of it, and may therefore reasonably be supposed to have produced the effect ascribed to it by the historian.

A history which contains an account of a sufficient number of these phænomena, furnishes us with the surest test of its authenticity. Almost all the credit which is given to the Chinese history is derived from this consideration. The eclipses there mentioned to have happened, astronomers say, did really happen at the times assigned to them*.

The theory of comets is not sufficiently ascertained

* I made this lecture a short one, because I used to produce in the course of it, calculations of several past eclipses, to illustrate the principles of it.

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to enable us to make much use of their revolutions for historical purposes; nor indeed are there any events they accompanied, which we cannot determine much more nearly by other mediums of proof, than it is probable we could have done by the help of comets, were their theory ever so well ascertained. Their returns are probably not sufficiently regular, nor, if they were, are the accounts of them in historians sufficiently exact for that purpose.

LECTURE XII.

THE calculations of eclipses are of great use in ascertaining particular events, if they have been previously determined within a moderate distance; but the grand astronomical medium which sir Isaac Newton has so successfully employed in rectifying the whole system of ancient chronology, is the *precession of the equinoxes*. The quantity of this precession is known, by a series of the most accurate observations, to be one degree backwards in 72 years; that is, the sun crosses the ecliptic so much more to the west every year, that at the end of 72 years his progress westward amounts to one degree, whereby the places of the equinoxes are continually receding from the constellations in the middle of which they were originally placed. Whenever, therefore, the situation of the equinoctial or solstitial points, or any appearance depending upon them, is mentioned, it is easy to ascertain the time of any event with which such an appearance was connected. It is done by observing how many degrees the equinoctial points have receded from the situation they then had to that which they have at present, and allowing 72 years to every degree.

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That the constellations were first invented at the time of the Argonautic expedition, is pretty evident from a variety of considerations. We have not only the testimony of several ancient writers for the fact, but the constellations themselves seem very plainly to declare as much. For the old constellations mentioned by Aratus, do all of them relate either to the Argonauts themselves and their contemporaries, or to persons one or two generations older; and nothing later than that expedition was delineated there originally. It is therefore very probable (as several ancient writers assert), that the first sphere was invented by Chiron and Musæus for the use of the Argonauts.

We have, moreover, the testimony of several ancient writers, that the equinoctial and solstitial points in this old sphere were placed upon the middle of the constellations that give names to them; namely, that the equinoctial colure was made to pass through the middle of the constellation Aries, and the solstitial colure through the middle of Cancer. Besides, the reason of the thing might reasonably lead us to imagine that the ancients would place the equinoxes and solstices as nearly in the midst of their respective constellations as their coarse observations would enable them to determine. For since the first month of their lunar-solar year, by reason of their intercalary month, began sometimes a week or a fortnight before the equinox or solstice, and sometimes as much after it, the first astronomers, who formed the asterisms, would naturally endeavour to place those grand divisions of the year, the equinoxes and solstices, as nearly as they could in the middle of the constellations Aries, Cancer, Chelæ, and Capricorn.

Admitting the colures to have passed through the

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middle of those constellations at the time of the Argonautic expedition, sir Isaac Newton finds that the equinoctial and solstitial points had gone back 36 degrees 44 minutes at the end of the year 1689; which, allowing 72 years to each degree, would have been accomplished in the space of 2645 years. This number, counted back from the year 1689, will place the Argonautic expedition about 25 years after the death of Solomon.

This computation proceeds upon the supposition that the middle of the constellation is exactly the middle point between the two stars called *prima Arietis* and *ultima Caudæ;* but if we fix the cardinal points by the stars through which the colures passed in the primitive sphere, as described by Eudoxus, which seems to be better,—the equinoctial points will have receded 36 degrees 29 minutes, which answers to 2627 years, and places the expedition 43 years after the death of Solomon, very near the same year to which it was referred by the other preceding and very different methods of computation; the very near and remarkable coincidence of which is the greatest confirmation of the certainty of both those methods of investigation.

What gives great weight to this argument from the precession of the equinoxes is, that if we reckon from whatever time the position of the equinoctial points hath been mentioned by astronomers whose age is known, this motion, counted backwards, fixes that great event in the same year. It likewise demonstrates that the observations of the ancients, though coarse enough, as sir Isaac acknowledges, are sufficiently exact for the purpose. As this circumstance is pretty remarkable, I shall mention the particulars of it.

According to Pliny, and the calculations of Petavius,

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Thales, who wrote a book of the tropics and equinoxes, fixed the equinoxes and solstices in the eleventh degree of their respective signs; so that they had receded 4 degrees 26 minutes and 52 seconds from their original place at the time of the Argonautic expedition. This answers to 320 years, and calculated backwards from the forty-first Olympiad (when Thales was a young man, fit to apply to astronomical studies) will place that event 44 years after the death of Solomon.

According to Columella, Meton and Euctemon, who published the lunar cycle of 19 years, and for this purpose observed the summer solstice in the year of Nabonassar 316, the year before the Peloponnesian war began, placed the summer solstice in the eighth degree of Cancer, which is at least 7 degrees more backwards than at first. This space answers to 504 years, which, counted backwards from the year of observation, makes the expedition fall upon the forty-fourth year after the death of Solomon.

Lastly, Hipparchus, who first discovered that the equinoxes had a regular motion backwards, made his observations about the year of Nabonassar 602, and fixed the vernal equinox in the fourth degree of Aries. Consequently, the equinoctial points had gone back 11 degrees since the Argonautic expedition, which is equivalent to 792 years, and which, counted backwards, places the expedition in the forty-third year after the death of Solomon.

These four coincidences are remarkable, and could not have placed the same event so near the same year, unless all the observations had been sufficiently exact. And when we consider the coincidences of a great many more independent evidences, derived from the course of generation and the order of succession, with those which are borrowed from astronomical princi-

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ples, nothing seems to be better established, than that the Argonautic expedition, an event on which all the Greek chronology depends, really happened about 43 years after the death of Solomon, and not in the days of Gideon, above 300 years before, as has been the common opinion.

It may be observed in this place, that the error of Hipparchus with respect to the quantity of the precession, is a proof that the chronology of Greece before his time was erroneous, and wanted correction. He makes it to be one degree in about 100 years, which he was necessarily led to conclude from the lengthening of the intervals of observation by the received chronology; and therefore the discovery that the precession of the equinoxes is only at the rate of 72 years to a degree, furnishes us with a good reason why we ought to shorten the time before Hipparchus in about the same proportion.

By arguments drawn from the rate of the precession of the equinoxes, we can nearly determine the age of an *old globe* found in the ruins of ancient Rome, and which is now preserved in the museum of the Farnesian palace, as one of the most curious monuments of antiquity. On this globe the equinoctial colure passes through the right horn and right foot of Aries, and is about 5 degrees distant from the equinoctial point laid down on the globe. From these circumstances it will appear that this globe was made about 40 years before Christ; and it is moreover probable, from the construction of this globe, that the colure passed through the bright star of Aries about 400 years before Christ.

The rising and setting of the stars with respect to the rising and setting of the sun depends also upon the precession of the equinoxes. Any writer, therefore, who mentions the rising or setting of any star, at any

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particular time of the year, with respect to the sun, furnishes us with data sufficient to determine the time in which he wrote. Thus Hesiod tells us that 60 days after the winter solstice the star Arcturus rose just at sun-set; from which circumstance it is easily calculated that Hesiod flourished about 100 years after the death of Solomon, or in the generation, or age, next to the Trojan war, as Hesiod himself declares; which is another independent argument for the date before assigned to that war, and all the Greek chronology connected with it.

Many other circumstances which Hesiod occasionally mentions, relating to the state of the heavens in his time, concur in leading us to the same conclusion. Virgil too, if his age had not been ascertained in another manner, has given us data of the same kind sufficient to determine it pretty nearly.

I cannot conclude these observations on the chronology of the earliest ages of the heathen world better than by reminding you, that the truth of the Scripture history being unquestionable, and relating to times prior to the age in which history began to be written by any other people than the Jews, it is the best guide to the knowledge of profane antiquity. It was in pursuing this plan that Newton was led to correct the ancient technical chronology of the Greeks by itself. The principles on which he reduces their accounts are founded on nature, and independent on any arguments drawn from Scripture. But it is more than probable, that seeing reason to think, from similar circumstances, that Sesostris must have been the same person with Sesac, of whom we have an account in the history of Rehoboam, he first of all fixed the date of that expedition according to the Scriptures; and that afterwards, from considering the subject in various points of light,

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he was led to the other arguments which have been mentioned; by which he was able to confirm the Scriptural date of that event, and also the dates of the principal facts in the history of Greece connected with it, in a manner independent of the authorities on which he first founded his opinion. Then, having by the joint helps of Scripture and reason rectified the chronology of the Greeks, he made use of this rectified chronology to adjust the contemporary affairs of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians.

If this analysis of the method of reasoning, so successfully used by sir Isaac Newton * in rectifying the chronology of ancient times, induce any of you who are intended for a learned profession to study so excellent and important a work, and be any help to you in understanding it, and I shall thus contribute to the more general reception of the great outlines of this system, I shall think that I have rendered an important service to the learned world.

* To the note *supra* p. 108 it may be added, that Newton replied to Freret, in 1726; also that Father Souciet, a Jesuit, controverted the Chronology of Newton in several dissertations. See *An Account of the Life and Writings of Sir Isaac Newton*, translated from the *Eloge* of M. Fontenelle. 1728. pp. 27—29; *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1789. vi. 468. There are some interesting particulars on this subject, derived by Bp. Pearce from personal intercourse with sir Isaac Newton. See "An Account" annexed to "The Life of Dr. Zachary Pearce," prefixed to his *Commentary*, and re-published in *Lives of Pocock*, &c. 1816. i. 428.—*Ed.*

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PART III.

WHAT IS NECESSARY, OR USEFUL, TO BE KNOWN PREVIOUS TO THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

LECTURE XIII.

BEFORE we enter upon the third division of our subject, which comprises what is necessary, or peculiarly useful, to be known previous to the study of history, it is proper to observe, that it must be taken in very different degrees of extent, according to the views with which history is read; and that this, as was observed before, depends very much upon the age and situation of the person who applies to it.

If particular portions of history be recommended to young persons, with a view to amuse their imaginations, to engage their passions, to discover their dispositions and genius, or form them to just and manly sentiments, in order to fit them for acting in the common spheres of life with more propriety and dignity, no previous qualifications at all are necessary. Let youth have history put into their hands as soon as they are capable of reading, provided that passages be selected with a view to their age and capacity. The uses above mentioned (which after all are the noblest that can be made of history) may be derived from it, though many particular passages in historians be unintelligible, and the reader be not capable of applying history to those purposes of science, to which it has been shown to be subservient.

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But if a person have further and scientific views in the study of history, he will find several branches of knowledge, and some articles of previous information, extremely useful, and in a manner necessary. It is true that those sciences, and those articles of information, were originally derived from history; and therefore that those who first applied to the study of it had not these helps. But the same may be said of grammars, which were made after the persons who wrote them had formed an acquaintance with the languages which they were designed to explain; but which are universally esteemed to be, in a manner, necessary to be understood by any person who would obtain at least an easy and speedy acquaintance with these languages afterwards. I shall therefore, in this part of my subject, point out those branches of science, and give the principal of those articles of information, which are peculiarly useful to a person who applies to the study of history. And indeed, if a person have no thought of establishing or confirming any principles of science by his study of history, it must greatly contribute to his pleasure in reading, to understand his author perfectly, and have a clear idea of every thing which is presented to him in the theatre he is viewing.

Considering the extensive nature of history, there is no branch of science which it may not be of advantage for a person to furnish himself with, preparatory to the study of it. But it must be observed, that an accurate and extensive knowledge of those sciences cannot be attained without some knowledge of history. Indeed their aid is mutual, just as the knowledge of grammar, as was observed before, qualifies a person for the reading of authors, and the reading of authors enlarges and perfects his acquaintance with grammar.

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There is no occasion, therefore, for a person who proposes to study history scientifically to defer his application to it till he be completely master of the sciences I shall recommend as peculiarly useful to his purpose. If he come to the reading of history furnished with the first principles of them, he will find his knowledge of them grow more perfect as he proceeds; particularly if he attend to the facts he becomes acquainted with, with that view.

For instance, the knowledge of *human nature* is of universal and constant use in considering the characters and actions of *men;* yet a very moderate knowledge of this important subject is the result of all our reading, of all our experience, and of all the observations we can make upon mankind. A general idea, however, of the principles of human nature will be an excellent guide to us in judging of the consistency of human characters, and of what is within, and what without the reach of human powers; and without some attention to this subject we might embrace all the fables of Grecian mythology, and all the extravagancies of books of chivalry, as undoubted truth, or admit it to be possible that the real heroes of antiquity might have been the same persons with those who bore their names in the most absurd of the modern plays and romances which are founded on their history.

Philosophical knowledge, in general, is of the most extensive use to all persons who would examine with accuracy the achievements of ancient nations in peace or war, or who would thoroughly weigh the accounts of any thing in which the powers of nature are employed. Without some acquaintance with philosophy it will be impossible to distinguish between the most absurd chimeras of Eastern romance and the most natural historical relations. Who but a philosopher, or a person

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acquainted with the powers of nature and art, could form any judgement of what the ancients relate concerning the prodigious machines of Archimedes, in the defence of Syracuse, or know what to think of the accounts of omens, oracles, and prodigies, which occur in such grave historians as Livy, Tacitus, Josephus, &c.?

Without some knowledge of philosophy a person might even admit, what many authors have related one after another, that the famous Otho, archbishop of Mayence, was besieged and devoured by an army of rats in 698*; that Gascony was deluged with showers of blood in 1017; or that two armies of serpents fought a battle near Tournay in 1059. It particularly requires a considerable acquaintance with several branches of philosophy to distinguish between truth and falsehood, probability and improbability, in the history of the customs and manners of ancient and remote nations.

Astronomy, though seemingly very remote from this subject of civil history, has been shown, in a preceding lecture, to instruct us in the business of chronological calculations; and *mathematical science*, in general, is usefully applied in measuring the greatness, and consequently in determining the probability, of many human works.

But those sciences which are of the most constant and general use to an historian, so as to have deserved to be called the *two eyes of history*, are *geography* and *chronology*. Without geography, or a knowledge of the situation and relative magnitude of the several countries of the earth, no reader of history can have any clear and distinct idea of what he reads, as being transacted in them. Besides, he would be liable to the grossest impositions, and might even be led to

* See Misson, *Voyage d'Italie*, i. 58. *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1789. vi. 621.—*Ed.*

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think, for instance, from Shakespeare, that ships might come to an harbour in Bohemia*. Moreover, by a knowledge of geography we are able to verify many past transactions, which, if they ever happened, must have left indelible traces upon the face of the earth. Many curious examples of this nature may be seen in Addison's, Maundrell's, and Shaw's *Travels*. The fissure in the rock of Mount Calvary, which was made when our Saviour was crucified†, and a large fragment of the rock of Rephidim near Mount Sinai‡, are remarkable facts of this nature.

This science of geography, being perfectly distinct from history, civil or ecclesiastical, though absolutely necessary to the knowledge of it, I shall not enter upon; but *chronology*, the other eye of history, as it consists chiefly of a knowledge of the artificial divisions of time, and partakes more of the nature of history, I shall explain as briefly as possible, especially as much of the principles of it as I apprehend to be of the most use in the study of history.

The use of chronology (though it may have been sometimes handled too minutely for the purpose of history) cannot be denied. We can form but very confused notions of the intervals of time, of the rise and fall of empires, and of the successive establishment of states, without some such general comprehension, as we may call it, of the whole current of time, as may enable us to trace out distinctly the dependence of events, and distribute them into such periods and divi-

* ——————" our ship hath touch'd upon
The deserts of Bohemia."—*Winter's Tale*, Act iii. Sc. 3.
Shakespeare "implicitly copied the novel before him."—*Dr. Farmer*. See Nichols's *Shakespeare*, 1797, iii. 242.—*Ed.*

† See *Maundrell*, pp. 73, 74. *Sandys*, p. 127. *Rauwolff*, in Ray's *Collection*, p. 1738. ii. 264.—*Ed.*

‡ See Bp. Clayton's *Journal to Mount Sinai*, p. 26.—*Ed.*

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sions, as shall lay the whole chain of past transactions in a just and orderly manner before us; and this is what chronology undertakes to assist us in.

The divisions of time which are considered in chronology relate either to the different methods of computing days, months, and years, or the remarkable æras or epochas from which any year receives its name, and by means of which the date of any event is fixed.

Time is commodiously divided by any equal motions, or the regular return of any appearances, in the heavens or on the earth, that strike the senses of all persons; and there are *three* of these, so particularly conspicuous, that they have been made use of for this purpose by all mankind. They are the changes of day and night, the course of the moon, and the return of the seasons of the year.

The first of these is produced by the revolution of the earth about its axis, and is called a *day;* the second is the period that elapses between one new moon and another, called a *month;* and the third is the time in which the earth completes its revolution about the sun, called a *year.*

Were these three periods commensurate to one another, that is, did a month consist of any equal number of days, and the year of a certain number of lunar months, a great part of the business of chronology would have been exceedingly easy. All the embarrassment of the ancient astronomers in settling their periods, and all the difficulty that attends the acquiring the knowledge of them, have been owing to the methods that mankind have been compelled to adopt in order to accommodate the three methods of computing time, viz. by days, months, and years, to one another, so as to make use of them all at the same time.

Beside these three natural divisions of time, there

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is another that may be called artificial, viz. into *weeks*, or periods of seven days, which took its rise from the Divine Being having completed the creation of the earth in seven days. But this division of time, though used by Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, and by almost all the people of Asia and Africa, was not observed by the Greeks or Romans.

To give as distinct a view of this subject as I am able, I shall first give some account of each of these divisions of time, noting all the principal subdivisions or distributions that have been made of them, and then describe the methods of accommodating them to one another.

Days have been very differently terminated and divided by different people in different ages, which it is of some importance to a reader of history to be acquainted with. The ancient Babylonians, Persians, Syrians, and most other Eastern nations, with the present inhabitants of the Balearic islands, the Greeks, &c. began their day with the sun's rising. The ancient Athenians and Jews, with the Austrians, Bohemians, Marcomanni, Silesians, modern Italians, and Chinese, reckon from the sun's setting; the ancient Umbri and Arabians, with the modern astronomers, from noon; and the Egyptians and Romans, with the modern English, French, Dutch, Germans, Spaniards, and Portuguese, from midnight.

The Jews, Romans, and most other ancient nations, divided the day into 12 hours, and the night into 4 watches. But the custom which prevails in this western part of the world at present is, to divide the day into 24 equal portions, only with some the 24 are divided into twice 12 hours; whereas others, particularly the Italians, Bohemians, and Poles, count 24 hours without interruption.

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LECTURE XIV.

As a complete lunation consists of about 29 days and a half, and the changes of the moon are very visible, there could be no great difficulty in accommodating them to each other, or in fixing what number of days should be allowed to a month. In general, the ancients made them to consist of 29 and 30 days alternately; and they could never make a mistake of a day without being able to rectify it (provided the view of the heavens was not obstructed) by ocular observation.

When months came to be reckoned, not by lunations, but were considered as each the twelfth part of a year, consisting of 365 days and some hours, it became necessary to allow sometimes 30 and sometimes 31 days to a month, as in the Roman calendar.

Whenever months are mentioned as divided by days in the books of Scripture, they are supposed to consist of 30 days each; and 12 months, or 360 days, make the year. This is particularly to be observed in interpreting the prophetical books of Daniel and St. John.

Different people have made their years to begin at different times, and have used a variety of methods to give names to them, and distinguish them from one another.

The Jews began the year, for civil purposes, with the month *Tizri*, which answers to our September; but for ecclesiastical purposes with *Nisan*, which answers to our April, at which time they kept the Passover.

The Athenians began the year with the month *Hecatombæon*, which began with the first new moon after the summer solstice.

The Romans had at first only *ten* months in their

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year, which ended with December, but Numa added January and February.

At present there are in Rome two ways of reckoning the year. One begins at Christmas, on account of the nativity of our Saviour; and the notaries of Rome use this date, prefixing to their deeds *à nativitate*: and the other at March, on account of the incarnation of Christ, and therefore the pope's bulls are dated *anno incarnationis*.

The ancient French historians began the year at the death of St. Martin, who died in 401 or 402; and they did not begin in France to reckon the year from January till 1564, by virtue of an ordinance of Charles IX. Before that time they began the day next after Easter, about the 25th of March.

In England also, till of late, we had two beginnings of the year; one in January, and the other on March 25: but by act of parliament, in 1752, the first day in January was appointed to be the beginning of the year for all purposes.

Most of the Eastern nations distinguish the year by the reigns of their princes. The Greeks also had no better method, giving names to them from the magistrates who presided in them, as in Athens from the archons. The Romans also named the year by the consuls. And it was a long time before any people thought of giving names to the years from any particular æra, or remarkable event. But at length the Greeks reckoned from the institution of the Olympic games, and the Romans from the building of Rome. They did not, however, begin to make these computations till the number of years that had elapsed since those events could not be computed with exactness, and therefore they have greatly antedated them.

About A. D. 360, the Christians began to reckon

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the year from the birth of Christ, but not time enough to enable the chronologers of that age to fix the true time of that event.

The Greeks distributed their years into systems of *four*, calling them *Olympiads*, from the return of the Olympic games every four years. And the Romans sometimes reckoned by *Lustra*, or periods of five years. The word comes from *luo*, which Varro says signifies *to pay*, because every fifth year they paid a tribute, imposed by the censor, at the solemn purification instituted by Servius Tullius.

The greatest difficulty in chronology has been to accommodate the two methods of computing time by the course of the moon and that of the sun to each other; the nearest division of the year by months being 12, and yet 12 lunar months falling 11 days short of a complete year. This gave birth to many *cycles* in use among the ancients, the principal of which I shall explain.

It appears from the relation which Herodotus has given of the interview between Solon and Crœsus, that, in the time of Solon, and probably that of Herodotus also, it was the custom with the Greeks to add, or, as it is termed, to *intercalate* a month every other year; but as this was evidently too much, they probably rectified it, by omitting the intercalation whenever they observed, by comparing the seasons of the year with their annual festivals, that they ought to do it. If, for instance, the first fruits of any kind were to be carried in procession on any particular day of a month, they would see the necessity of intercalating a month, if, according to their usual reckoning, those fruits were not then ripe; or they would omit the intercalation if they were ready. And, had no other view interposed, their reckoning could never have erred far from the

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truth. But it being sometimes the interest of the chief magistrates to lengthen or shorten a year, for the purposes of ambition, every other consideration was often sacrificed to it, and the greatest confusion was introduced into their computations.

Finding themselves, therefore, under a necessity of having some certain rule of computation, they first pitched upon *four years*, in which they intercalated only 1 month. But this producing an error of 14 days in the whole cycle, they invented the period of *eight years*, in which they intercalated 3 months, in which was an excess of only 1 day and 14 hours; and therefore this cycle continued in use much longer than either of the preceding.

But the most perfect of these cycles was that which was called the *Metonic*, from Meton, an Athenian astronomer, who invented it. It consisted of 19 years, in which 7 months were intercalated. This brought the two methods to so near an agreement, that, after the expiration of the period, not only do the new and full moons return on the same day of the year, but very nearly on the same hour of the day.

This cycle was adopted by the Christians at the council of Nice, for the purpose of settling the time for keeping Easter, and other moveable feasts. This period, however, falling short of 19 years almost an hour and a half, it has come to pass that the new and full moons in the heavens have anticipated the new and full moons in the calendar of the Book of Common Prayer 4 days and a half. These last are called *calendar new moons*, to distinguish them from the true new moons in the heavens.

It has not been without difficulty and variety that the computation by *years* has been accommodated to

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that by *days;* since a year does not consist of any even number of days, but of 365 days, 5 minutes, and 49 seconds.

It will appear from what has been observed, that, so long as mankind computed chiefly by months, it was not of much consequence to determine with exactness the number of days in the year; and this method sufficiently answered every civil and religious purpose. But the Egyptians, and other nations addicted to astronomy, were not satisfied with the method of computing by lunar months, the days of which varied so very much from one another in different years: they therefore made the *year* the standard, and dividing that into *days*, made use of *months* only as a commodious intermediate division, and, without regard to the course of the moon, distributed the days of the year into *twelve parts*, as nearly equal as they conveniently could. By this means the same day of the month would fall on the same part of the sun's annual revolution, and therefore would more exactly correspond to the seasons of the year. The Mexicans divided their year into 18 parts.

The Egyptians, as also the Chaldeans and Assyrians, reckoned at first 360 days to the year, but afterwards 365. The consequence of this was that the beginning of their year would go back through all the seasons, though slowly; namely, at the rate of about 6 hours every year. Of this form, too, were the years which took their date from the reign of Nabonassar of Babylon, Yesdigerd of Persia, and the Seleucidæ of Syria.

It must be observed, however, that the people who reckoned their year from these epochas, namely, the Egyptians, Persians, and Jews, as also the Arabians, had a different and more fixed form of the year for as-

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tronomical purposes; but as no use was made of it in civil history, the account of it is omitted in this place.

The inconvenience attending the form of the year above mentioned was in a great measure remedied by the Romans, in the time of Julius Cæsar, who added one day every fourth year, which (from the place of its insertion, viz. after the 6th of the calends of March), was called *bissextile*, or leap year. This form of the year is still called the *Julian* year. But the true length of the year being not quite 6 hours more than the 365 days, this allowance was too much; and Pope Gregory XIII. introduced another amendment in the year 1582, by ordering that once in 133 years, a day should be taken out of the calendar, in the following manner, viz. from the year 1600 every hundredth year (which according to the Julian form is always bissextile, or leap year) was to be common, but every four hundredth year was to continue bissextile, as in the Julian account. As this pope made allowance at once for all the alteration that his method would have made in the course of the year from the time of the council of Nice, the *new style* (for so his regulation of the year is called) differed from the old style 10 days at the very commencement of it, and is now 11 days different from it. The new style was adopted in England in 1752.

The Mahometans make their year to consist of lunar months only, without endeavouring to adapt it to the course of the sun; so that with them the beginning of the year goes through all the seasons at the rate of about 11 days every year.

But since the exact time of 12 moons, besides the 354 whole days, is about 8 hours and 48 minutes, which make 11 days in 36 years, they are forced to add 11 days in 30 years, which they do by means of a cy-

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cle, invented by the Arabians, in which there are 19 years with 354 days only, and 11 intercalary of 355 days, and they are those in which the number of hours and minutes more than the whole days in the year is found to be more than half a day, such as 2, 5, 7, 10, 13, 16, 18, 21, 24, 26, and 29; by which means they fill up all the inequalities that can happen.

It has been of some consequence to Christians to adjust the days of the week to the days of the month, and of the year, in order to get a rule for finding *Sunday*. Had there been no bissextile, it is evident that, since the year consists of 52 weeks and 1 day, all the varieties would have been comprised in 7 years. But the bissextile returning every fourth year, the series of *dominical letters* succeeding each other is interrupted, and does not return in order, but after 4 times 7 years, or 28 years, which is therefore commonly called the *solar cycle*, serving as a rule to find Sunday, and consequently all the days of the week of every month and year.

Besides the above-mentioned periods of years, called *cycles*, there are some other combinations, or systems of years, that are of use in chronology, as that called the *indiction*, which is a period of 15 years; at the end of which a certain tribute was paid by the provinces of the Roman empire, and by which the emperors ordered public acts to be dated.

But the most remarkable of all the periods in chronology is that called the *Julian period*, invented by Joseph Scaliger, and called *Julian*, from the years of which it consists being Julian years. His object was to reduce to a certainty the different methods of computing time, and fixing the dates of events, by different chronologers. For this purpose nothing was necessary but a series of years, some term of which was fixed (that, for instance,

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by which the present year should be denominated), comprehending the whole extent of time. Since, if each chronologer would apply that common measure to his particular scheme, they would all perfectly understand one another.

To accomplish this, he combined the three periods of the *sun*, the *moon*, and the *indiction* together, that is, multiplying the numbers 28, 19, and 15 into one another, which produces 7980; after which period, and not before, all the three cycles will return in the same order every year, being distinguished by the same number of each.

In order to fix the beginning of this period, he took the cycles as he then found them settled in the Latin church; and, tracing them backwards through their several combinations, he found that the year in which they would all begin together was the year before the Creation 714, according to Usher, and that the first year of the Christian æra would be 4714 of this period.

There is a further convenience in this period, viz. that if any year be divided by the number composing the cycles, viz. 28, 19, or 15, the quotient will show the number of the cycles that have elapsed since the commencement of it, and the remainder will give the year of the cycle corresponding to the year given.

I cannot help observing that this boasted period seems to have been unnecessary for the chief purpose for which it was invented, viz. to serve as a common language for chronologers, and that now little use is made of it, notwithstanding all writers still speak of it in the same magnificent terms. The vulgar Christian æra answers the same purpose as effectually.

All that can be necessary for chronologers to speak the same language, and be perfectly understood by one

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another, and by all mankind, is to give every year the same name or designation, which is most conveniently done by expressing them in a series of numbers in arithmetical progression, any one term of which they shall agree to affix to the same year, a year in which any well-known event happened. Let it, for example, be that in which the peace of Paris was made, and let it be called 1763. If, besides this, it be only agreed in what part of the revolution of the sun, or in what month and day the year begins, there can be no difficulty in giving a name to every other year preceding or following it, and thereby ascertaining the interval between all transactions; for all the events that took place the year before that peace will be referred to the year 1762, and all in the year after it to 1764. This period having had a commencement since the date of history is no inconvenience; for whenever we have gone back to number *one* of this period, the year preceding it may be called *one before its commencement*, the year preceding that *two* before it, &c. and thus proceeding *ad infinitum* both ways.

That Christ might not have been born in the first of that system of years to which it serves to give a name is no inconvenience whatever; since, whatever differences of opinion there may be among chronologers about the time when Christ was born, they all agree in calling the present year, and consequently every other year, by the same name, and therefore they have the same idea of the interval between the present year and any other year in the system. The real time of Christ's birth can no more affect the proper use of this system than that of any other indifferent event; since, using the same *system of dates*, they may say Christ was born in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or, what I think to be the case, in the seventh year before the Christian æra.

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Whenever, therefore, chronologers ceased to date events from the *creation*, which was very absurd (since they did not agree in fixing the interval between the present year and the date of that event, and therefore gave all the years different names), they had no occasion to have recourse to any such period as the Julian; since another, capable of answering the same purposes, was already in common use, supplying them with a language which they all equally understood.

Æras, or Epochas, are memorable events from which time is reckoned, and from which any subsequent year receives its denomination. The Greeks for a long time (as I observed before) had no fixed æra; afterwards they reckoned by Olympiads, which were games celebrated in honour of Jupiter once in 4 years, and began in Midsummer, 776 years before Christ. The Athenians gave names to their years from their archons. The Romans called their years from the names of the consuls who presided in them; and afterwards they dated events from the building of their city, supposing it to have been built 753 years before Christ.

Some histories are regulated by the year of Nabonassar, who began his reign in the year 747 before Christ, of the Julian period 3867. It is supposed to have commenced on the twenty-sixth of February in the afternoon.

The Jews, before Christ, reckoned by the year of the Seleucidæ, sometimes called the year of the Contracts, which began in the year 312 before Christ, of the Julian period 4402, some time in the spring.

The Christians, about 360 years after the birth of Christ, began to make use of that æra which is now used in all Christian countries.

The Mahometans reckon their years from the flight of Mahommed from Mecca. This æra is called the

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Hegyra. It began in the year 622 after Christ, of the Julian period 5335, on the sixteenth of July.

The old Spanish æra is dated from the year 38 before Christ, about the time when they were subdued by the Romans. It was used till the year 1333, under John I. of Castile.

The Egyptians long reckoned from the battle of Actium, which happened in the year 31 before Christ, of the Julian period 4683, on the third of September.

Before the Christian æra was used, the Christians for some time made use of the Dioclesian æra, which took its rise from the persecution by Dioclesian in the year 284 after Christ.

The æra of Yesdigerd is dated from the last king of Persia, who was conquered by the Saracens in the year 632 after Christ, of the Julian period 5345, on the sixteenth of June.

With regard to all these methods of denominating time, care must be taken that the year be reckoned according to the method of computation followed by the people who use it. Thus, in reckoning from the Hegyra, a person would be led into a mistake who should make those years correspond to Julian years. He must deduct 11 days from every year which has elapsed since the commencement of it. Thus, though the first year of this æra corresponded to the year 622 after Christ, and began on the sixteenth of July, the year 326 of the Hegyra corresponded to the year 937 of Christ, and began November the eighth. And the year of the Hegyra 655 commenced on the nineteenth of January 1257.

This compendium of chronology is sufficient for the purpose of reading history, but is by no means a complete account of the methods of computing time in every particular country which has been mentioned.

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To have done this, would have carried me beyond my present purpose, and too far into the customs of particular countries. For a fuller account I refer you to Strauchius*, and other chronologers.

LECTURE XV.

An article of information the most immediately necessary to a reader of history, is how to make a just estimate of the riches and power of ancient and remote nations, and to compare them with those of our own age and nation, by means of the expressions which historians have used to denote the riches and power of states, and particularly by the sums of money which are occasionally mentioned in their writings. The true state of the riches of nations, in the several periods of their history, will be pointed out as an object of the first importance to an historian. On this account, it is of consequence that every reader of history have it in his power to form a just idea of them from the *data* he finds in historians, and that he be guarded against the mistakes which, without some previous instruction, he would unavoidably fall into with respect to them.

I shall therefore endeavour to explain the sources of uncertainty and ambiguity that every circumstance in our situation can occasion to us, in interpreting the sums of money which are mentioned in the histories of the most considerable nations, and I shall then give such a collection of *facts*, collected from history, as shall show us the true state of every thing connected with money in the most remarkable successive periods

* Ægidius Strauchius, who died in 1682, aged 50. His *Breviarium Chronologicum*, published at Wittemberg, was translated by Richard South. 1732.—*Ed.*

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of time in those countries. By this means it will be easy to make every necessary allowance for the difference of circumstances between us and them, and thus exhibit whatever accounts we meet with of the riches and power of ancient times and nations, in a fair contrast with the riches and power of our own age and nation, and so to form the clearest idea we can get of them.

In order to this, it must be considered, that *money* is only a commodious representative of the *commodities* which may be purchased with it; and we shall have the easiest view of this subject if we, moreover, consider *silver* as the only standard of money, and gold and copper, as substitutes for silver, or as commodities which are represented, and may be purchased, by silver. Now, there are two things which may make an alteration in the representative power of money. The one is a change of the idea annexed to any common name of a piece, or a sum of money, and the other is an alteration of the proportion between the quantity of money in a state, and the commodities represented by it. I shall explain each of these more particularly.

If a change be made in the standard of a coin which continues to go by the same name, it is plain that the same name no longer expresses the same idea, and therefore, if we be not aware of this change, we shall be misled by the expressions. For instance, if the quantity of silver which we call *a pound*, be at this time but half the quantity which was formerly called by that name, it is plain, that if we would form a just idea of the value of a pound in times previous to the alteration, we must suppose it to be two of our present pounds, instead of one, for so in fact it is.

The tables of our coin only show the proportion which sums denoted by particular names, as pounds, shillings, pence, &c., bear to one another; and though

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these sums may have always kept the same proportion, the absolute value of them all may have changed. And *tables*, which show the value of ancient or foreign money, are always calculated according to the last standard of both, which is generally the lowest. The present tables, therefore, are not sufficient to inform a reader of history of the true value of sums of money expended, or acquired, in early times. He must also have an historical account of those changes in the value of coin, which alter the quantity of metal contained in it, either by diminishing the size of the current pieces, or lessening the fineness of the metal by a greater proportion of alloy.

As the generality of historians take no notice of changes in the value of money, but content themselves with mentioning sums by their common names, I shall endeavour (as far as the materials I have been able to collect will enable me) to supply this defect with respect to those histories which are most interesting to us.

As it is a maxim in trade, that *every thing will find its value* (and indeed the value which the exchange of any thing, in buying and selling, has, is its real value, that is, its true relative value with respect to other things), the accounts of sums exchanged for commodities in history are the only *data* we have given us, to determine this relative value of money; and if we have enow of these accounts, they will be abundantly sufficient for the purpose.

To judge of the proportion between the quantity of circulating cash in different nations, or different periods of the same nation, it is evident that we must not be guided by the price of any single article, particularly an article of luxury; because the prices of these things depend upon fancy and caprice, which are continually changing. The best guide upon the whole

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seems to be the price of mere *labour*, estimated by the wages given to persons of the lowest occupations. For these have been observed, in all ages and nations, to be little more than a bare subsistence, and the articles of *their* expense must be the *necessaries* of life.

Besides, it is self-evident, that the man who can command the most of the labour of his fellow-creatures is the richest, and the most powerful. For this, in fact, is all that wealth and power can procure a man. If it be said that what is necessary in some countries, is superfluous in others, as clothes in hot climates, bread or flesh-meat in countries where each of those articles may not be used, and the like; it is still obvious, that the less money will purchase *necessaries*, whatever they be, the more value it is of, and the more a person may spare out of the same sum for the conveniencies and superfluities of life, by purchasing the labour of his fellow-creatures.

We are not, however, to judge of a man's wealth by the number of persons he can maintain, unless those persons contribute nothing by their labour towards their own maintenance. He must, by commanding the labour of *others*, (for it cannot be done in any other way,) maintain them. But if they be a continual expense to him, as if they were employed in building, or other great works, in the army, or kept upon charity, it seems to be a very fair medium of computation. If therefore, for instance, we read that one person was impoverished by employing 1000 labouring men upon any piece of work, and that another was able to keep 2000 at work, we need not trouble ourselves to consider the situation of their different countries, and times, the prices of provision, manner of living, &c., but may very fairly conclude, that the one was twice as rich and powerful as the other.

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Under the second head, therefore, I shall endeavour to find the proportion between money and the necessaries of life, in the different periods of those histories with which a gentleman and scholar would choose to be best acquainted. And at the same time that I endeavour, in this manner, to determine the proportion which the quantity of current money has borne to vendible commodities, I shall likewise take notice of the price of money with regard to itself, that is, the *interest* it has borne. It is true that the interest of money has been very justly called the barometer of states with respect to other things than those I am now considering, and which may be the subject of a future lecture*; but in the mean time it may not be amiss to take notice of it at present, as a commodity, and on many occasions one of the most necessary. For, since money may be of use like any other commodity which a person may make advantage of, he is the richest man (*cæteris paribus*) whose stated revenues can purchase the most extensive use of it.

Having explained the nature of this subject, I shall enter upon it by giving the best account that I have been able to collect (taken almost wholly from Arbuthnot†) of the successive changes which have taken place in the value of nominal sums of money among the Greeks and Romans, with the proportion which they bore to commodities, and then give a more particular account of the like changes and proportions in English and French money, and to each I shall subjoin an account of the changes in the rate of interest; not that I shall perhaps keep all these articles perfectly di-

* See *infra* Lect. LIII.—*Ed.*

† Dr. Arbuthnot "published in 1727, in 4to, his work entitled *Tables of ancient Coins, Weights, and Measures*, explained and exemplified in several Dissertations." *Biog. Brit.* i. 239. There was a 2nd edition in 1754, with an "Appendix, containing Observations by B. Langwith, D.D."—*Ed.*

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stinct, since very little inconvenience, and perhaps some advantage, may arise from occasionally mixing them.

The Greek coins underwent very little change compared with that of the Roman money, or of the money of modern European states, and are therefore the less worthy of our notice. All the allowance we are to make for the changes of value in the *Drachma* (a coin equal to the Roman *Denarius*, and worth about 8*d.* of our present money), and to which the changes of value in the rest of their money corresponded, is, that from Solon to the time of Alexander we must reckon 67 grains for the weight of it, thence to the subjection of Greece by the Romans 65, and under the Romans 62 and a half, a change which is very inconsiderable.

The constant and stated rate of the value of gold to silver among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, in the whole period of ancient times, was 10 to 1, with very little variation, and the rate of silver to Cyprian brass 100 to 1; and the general supposition is, that there was one-fiftieth part of alloy in the gold coins of the ancients. At present, gold is to silver as about 15 to 1, and silver to copper as 73 to 1.

Numa, or Servius Tullius, first stamped brass money among the Romans; silver was not stamped by them till the year of the city 485, the time of their war with Pyrrhus; and gold not till 62 years after.

The *As*, from being a pound weight avoirdupois, fell to 2 ounces in the first Punic war, in the second Punic war to 1 ounce, and presently after it was fixed "by the Papirian law to half an ounce. These alterations were occ sioned by the necessities of the commonwealth; but," as Arbuthnot observes*, "the plenty of silver and gold would have done the same thing, and brought down such an enormous brass coin;" or rather

* *Tables*, 1754. p. 10.—*Ed.*

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silver coins of an equal value, and of less weight, would have been introduced.

It may easily be imagined how scarce silver was at Rome, when in all the early times of the Roman history, 840 pounds of brass were equivalent to 1 of silver. Some say the proportion between these two metals before the first Punic war was 960 to 1. The different proportion which was just now observed to have taken place in Greece, during the same period, shows how little communication there was between Greece and Rome in those times. Indeed the commonwealth gradually reduced this proportion, probably in consequence of a freer intercourse with other nations, which would necessarily be attended with the introduction of silver where it was so scarce.

The adulteration of the Roman coin in some periods of their history exceeds any thing we read of with respect to other countries. The money of Caracalla had more than one-half alloy, that of Alexander Severus two-thirds, and under Gallienus it was nothing more than gilt copper.

To enable us to judge of the proportion of money to commodities, I have selected some of the accounts that I have met with concerning the most necessary articles of consumption in the several countries and ages which I have proposed to consider.

Corn was commonly reckoned in Greece at a drachma the medimnus, which, reduced to our computation, is 4*s.* 6*d.* per quarter. In Demosthenes's time it was much higher; being 5 drachmas the medimnus, which is about 1*l.* 2*s.* 7*d.* per quarter. In times of plenty in Greece, the price of a sheep was 8*d.*, of a hog 2*s.*, an ox 3*s.*; and a soldier served for a drachma a day, which is about 8*d.* Upon the whole, we may perhaps allow that the proportion of money to commo-

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dities in the most flourishing time of Greece, or the time in which the classical historians wrote, was about one-third less than it is at present with us; which was about the same that it was in Europe before the discovery of America.

As the common people of Rome lived very much upon bread-corn, the price of that article will be a better guide to us than any other single circumstance in judging of the proportion between money and the necessaries of life among them. The ancient price of corn in Rome, and to which it was reduced at the burning of Rome by Nero, was 3 nummi the modius, that is, 3¾*d.* the peck. According to Pliny, the coarsest bread was made of corn worth 40 ases, equal to 2*s.* 6¼*d.* a peck; of wheaten bread 48 ases, equal to 3*s.* 0½*d.*; and the finest of all 80 ases, or 5*s.* 1¼*d.*; so that about the time of Pliny corn was considerably dearer in Rome than it is commonly at London.

The article which stands next to bread-corn among the necessaries of life, is *clothing*. Common wearing clothes, made of wool, such as were always worn at Rome, we should not think very dear. For Cato the elder never wore a suit worth above 100 drachms, equal to 3*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.*; and we must consider that the Roman clothes were not made close, but large and loose, and therefore would last longer than our close garments. This article is likewise to be understood of plain undyed cloth, which was white; for the expense of *dyeing*, particularly purple, which the Romans and the ancients in general most of all affected, was prodigious. Pelagium, one species of that dye, was worth 50 nummi, equal to 8*s.* 11*d.*, per pound. The buccinum, another species of it, was double that value; the violet purple was 3*l.* 10*s.* 11*d.* per pound; and the Tyrian double dye could scarcely be bought for 35*l.* 9*s.* 1¼*d.* per pound.

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There must also have been a great difference in the fineness of their wool, and consequently in the price of it. For a Roman pound of Padua wool, the finest of all (though indeed when it was rather dear), sold for 100 nummi, at which rate the English pound troy comes to 17*s.* 8¾*d.*

Wine seems always to have been cheap at Rome. For, according to Columella, the common sort was worth 8 pounds per ton.

In the early times of Rome, the price of a good calf was 25 ases, equal to 1*s.* 7¾*d.* The price of a sheep a denarius, or 8*d.*; and the price of an ox ten times as much. These articles Arbuthnot quotes from Pliny, who, no doubt, makes allowance for the alteration in the coin. Otherwise they must have been much dearer than we can reasonably suppose in the early times of the commonwealth. According to Varro, sheep in his time were commonly worth 25*s.* each, a bullock 12*l.* 10*s.*, and a calf 3*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* This makes the price of butcher's meat nearly the same as in London.

An English acre of middling land, for a vineyard, was worth, according to Columella, 14*l.* 15*s.* 3*d.*, and the Jugerum was to the English acre as 10 to 16. According to the same author, the common mean rent of an acre of pasture ground was 1*l.* 8*s.* 10*d.* Lands were commonly reckoned at 25 years purchase. For the lands of the government were so let, paying according to the rate of 4 pounds per cent.

The price of land was considerably increased by the great treasures brought to Rome in Augustus's reign. An acre of the best ground in the city of Rome, under the emperors, may be reckoned to have brought in a ground rent of 5 pounds per annum.

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The price of an ordinary slave, in Cato major's time, was 377 drachms, equal to 48*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.*

Before Domitian, the Roman soldiers served for under 5*d.*, and afterwards for about 6*d.* a day; so that if we take the price of day labour from the pay of a soldier (which in most countries, and particularly ancient nations, it hardly ever exceeds), it will not make it much higher in Rome than in our own country.

From the prices of all these articles taken together, we should conclude that the proportion which money bore to commodities in the most flourishing times of the commonwealth, and under the first emperors, was rather higher than it bears at present with us. But this could only be the case at Rome, and the neighbourhood of it. All the necessaries of life were considerably cheaper in Greece. Polybius, who lived in the time of the third Punic war, says that provisions were so cheap in Italy in his time, that, in some places, the stated club in the inns was a semis a head, which is but little more than a farthing. And under the later emperors, the prices of all necessaries were certainly nearly the same that they were in this part of Europe before the discovery of America.

All the articles mentioned above relate to what may be called the *necessaries* of life. How extravagant the Romans were in entertainments and the elegancies of life, we may form some idea of from the following circumstance, that Roscius the actor (whose profession was less respectable at Rome than it is even with us,) could gain 500 sestertia, equal to 4036*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.* per annum; and per day, when he acted, 1000 nummi, equal to 32*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.* Various curious instances of Roman luxury may be seen in Arbuthnot*.

* *Tables.* Ch. v. p. 129.—*Ed.*

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The most moderate *interest* at Athens was 12 per cent. paid monthly, and according to Aristophanes it was somewhat more. The rent of other things, likewise, was very high in proportion to their value. Antidorus, says Demosthenes, paid three talents and a half for a house, which he let for a talent a year. If this were true, admitting it to have been an extraordinary case, it is no wonder that the hire of money bore so extraordinary a price in proportion to its value. Such circumstances as these are a demonstration of the precarious state of property. For both with regard to money, and every thing else, the more secure it is supposed to be, the less annual interest is required in proportion to its value.

In the early times of the Roman commonwealth too, interest was, at a medium, 12 per cent. In the flourishing times of the commonwealth, it was at 6, and though it was suddenly reduced to 4 upon the conquest of Egypt, it presently rose to its old standard; and in Pliny's time 6 per cent. was the public customary interest of money; Justinian reduced it to 4 per cent. and money lent to masters of ships, to 1 per cent. per month. This kind of interest had before been 2 per cent. per month.

But there was a peculiarity in the Roman method of putting out money to interest, which must be explained, as we have nothing like it with us. With them it was customary after 101 months to add 6 per cent. to the principal, besides the simple interest which was due upon the sum. This they called *anatocismos* *, so that their usual rate for long interest was neither simple nor compound, but something between both.

* "Ανατοκιζω, usuram renovo. Hinc Ανατοκισμος, usuræ renovatio anniversaria." *Hederic*, 1778.—*Ed.*

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LECTURE XVI.

THE English money, though the same names do by no means correspond to the same quantity of precious metal as formerly, has not changed so much as the money of most other countries. In this part of my subject, I am so happy as to be able to give a much more complete deduction of the changes both in the value of money, and the proportion it has borne to commodities, than in the preceding. A view of all the changes which the standard of our money has ever undergone, I shall present to you at once, in a table extracted from the account lately published of *English coins* by the society of antiquaries*. But previous to this, it will be proper to inform you, that, in the Saxon times, a shilling (at one time at least) was reckoned to contain 5 pence, or pennyweights, and a pound contained 48 shillings, which is the same number of pence that a pound contains now.

However, the proportion between the *shilling* and either the *penny* on the one hand, or the *pound* on the other, seems not to have been so constant and uniform as that between the *penny* and the *pound*. During the first race of the kings of France, the French *sou*, or *shilling*, appears, upon different occasions, to have contained 5, 12, 20, and 40 pennies. From the time of Charlemagne among the French, and from that of William the Conqueror among the English, the proportion between the *pound*, the *shilling*, and the *penny*, seems to have been uniformly the same as at present†.

Though a different distribution of the subdivisions of a pound was introduced with the Normans, yet Wil-

* In 1763. "First published by Martin Foulkes."—*Ed.*

† Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. i. 40.

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liam the Conqueror brought no new weight into his mint; but the same weight used there some ages after, and called the *pound of the tower of London*, was the old pound of the Saxon moniers before the conquest. This pound was lighter than the pound troy by 3 ounces. It was divided into 240 pence, and consequently the intrinsic value of that sum in weight was the same as the value of 58*s.* 1¼*d.* of our present coined money.

It may not be improper also to premise, that Edward III. was the first of our kings who coined any gold; and that no copper was coined by authority before James I. These pieces were not called *farthings*, but *farthing tokens*, and all people were at liberty to take or refuse them. Before the time of Edward III. gold was exchanged, like any other commodity, by its weight; and before the time of James I., copper was stamped by any person who chose to do it.

The following table exhibits at one view the standard of our silver money as to goodness, together with the true weight of 240 pence, 60 groats, or 20 shillings, making the pound sterling in tale, and the present intrinsic value of so much silver as was respectively contained in the same pound sterling at the several times there noted in the first column. To this is also added, in the last, the same intrinsic value of the nominal pound sterling, expressed in decimals of our present sterling pound; whereby the proportion of the intrinsic value of any sum of money mentioned in books, to the intrinsic value of so much money as it is now called by the same appellation, may immediately be known, and the prices of provisions, labour, and materials in former times, may readily be compared with the different prices which the like provisions, labour, and materials, are found to bear at this day.

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The meaning of the term *old sterling*, in the second column of the following table, is that 11 ounces 2 pennyweights of fine silver, were contained in 12 ounces of old coin. The numbers which express the alterations made afterwards, show the additional quantity of alloy used in some reigns.

TABLE.

Year of the king's reign, and A. D.	Standard of Silver.	Weight of 20s. in tale.	Value of the same in present money.	Proportion
		oz.dwts.grs.	£ *s.* *d*	
Conquest - 1066	Old sterling	11 5 0	2 18 1½	2,906
28 Edward I. 1300	Ditto	11 2 5	2 17 5	2,871
18 Edw. III. 1344	Ditto	10 3 0	2 12 5½	2,621
20 ditto - 1346	Ditto	10 0 0	2 11 8	2,583
27 ditto - 1353	Ditto	9 0 0	2 6 6	2,325
13 Henry IV. 1412	Ditto	7 10 0	1 18 9	1,937
4 Edw. IV. 1464	Ditto	6 0 0	1 11 0	1,55
18 Hen. VIII. 1527	Ditto	5 6 16	1 7 6½	1,378
34 ditto - 1543	w.1*oz.* 2*dwt.*	5 0 0	1 3 3½	1,163
36 ditto - 1545	5 2	Ditto	0 13 11½	0,698
37 ditto - 1546	7 2	Ditto	0 9 3½	0,466
3 Edw. VI. 1549	5 2	3 6 16	Ditto	Ditto
5 ditto - 1551	8 2	Ditto	0 4 7½	0,232
6 ditto - 1552	0 1	4 0 0	1 0 6½	1,028
1 Mary - 1553	0 2	Ditto	1 0 5½	1,024
2 Eliz. - 1560	Old sterling	Ditto	1 0 8	1,033
43 ditto - 1601	Ditto	3 17 10	1 0 0	1,000

It appears that in the 27th year of king Edward III. 1353, when the first considerable coinage of gold was made in England, fine gold was rated in our coins at 11 times and about $\frac{1}{8}$th part as much as fine silver. But even this value of gold was thought too great in the time of Henry IV.; and the same being complained of, by the regulations made in his 13th year, 1412, gold came to be exchanged for 10 times and about a-third of an equal quantity of silver. In the 4th year of Edward IV. 1464, gold was again valued at a little more than 11 times the price of silver. During 140 years next following there was scarce any alteration

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made in the proportional value of the two metals, excepting only in the times of confusion, between the 34th year of Henry VIII. and the last of Edward VI.; and by the indentures of the 43rd year of queen Elizabeth, and those of the first of king James, 1603, the pound weight of fine gold in the coin was yet rated at somewhat less than 11 pounds weight of silver. But soon after that time, the price of gold was sensibly advanced, the pound weight of it being valued in the indentures of the second year of king James at more than 12 pounds and an ounce; and in the 17th year of the same king, at more than 13 pounds 4 ounces and 3 pennyweights of fine silver. When guineas came first to be coined for 20-shilling pieces, in the 15th year of Charles II. 1663, the pound of fine gold was made equivalent to 14 pounds 5 ounces 16 pennyweights and 9 grains of fine silver; which value (by the running of guineas as they now do for 21*s.* each,) is yet further advanced to 15 pounds 2 ounces 10 pennyweights and 7 grains of the same silver.

The Scots money pound contained, from the time of Alexander the First, to that of Robert Bruce, a pound of silver of the same weight and fineness with the English pound sterling. Their pound and penny now contain about a 36th part of their original value*.

Having thus exhibited a view of the successive changes of the English coin to the present time, I shall endeavour to ascertain the proportion that money has from time to time borne to commodities, by means of the prices of things taken at proper intervals, from the times of the Saxons down to our own.

In the years 712 and 727, an ewe and lamb were rated at 1*s.* Saxon money till a fortnight after Easter. Between 900 and 1000, 2 hydes of land, each con-

* Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. i. 39, 41.

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taining about 120 acres, were sold for 100*s*. In 1000, by king Ethelred's laws, a horse was rated at 30*s*., a mare, or a colt of a year old, at 20*s*., a mule or young ass at 12*s*., an ox at 30*d*., a cow at 24*d*., a swine at 8*d*., a sheep at 1*s*. In 1043, a quarter of wheat was sold for 60*d*. From these and some other similar facts it is computed, that in the Saxon times there was 10 times less money in proportion to commodities than at present. Their nominal species, therefore, being about 3 times higher than ours, the price of every thing, according to our present language, must be reckoned 30 times cheaper than it is now.

In the reign of William the Conqueror, commodities were 10 times cheaper than they are at present; from which we cannot help forming a very high idea of the wealth and power of that king. For the revenue of William the Conqueror was 400,000*l*. per annum, every pound being equal to that weight of silver. Consequently the whole may be estimated at 1,200,000*l*. of the present computation; a sum which, considering the different value of money between that period and the present time, was equivalent to 12 millions of modern estimation.

The most necessary commodities do not seem to have advanced their price from William the Conqueror to Richard I.

The price of corn, in the reign of Henry III. was near half the mean price in our times. Bishop Fleetwood * has shown that in the year 1240, which was in this reign, 4*l*. 13*s*. 9*d*. was worth about 50*l*. of our present money. About the latter end of this reign

* See his "*Chronicon Pretiosum*: or An Account of the English Gold and Silver Money, the Price of Corn, and other Commodities, for the last 600 Years." 1707.—A new edition, 1745, with "An Appendix, containing an historical account of Coins."—*Ed.*

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Robert de Hay, rector of Souldern, agreed to receive 100*s.* to purchase to himself and successor the annual rent of 5*s.*, in full compensation of an acre of corn.

Butcher's meat, in the time of the great scarcity in the reign of Edward II. was, by a parliamentary ordinance, sold three times cheaper than our mean price at present; poultry somewhat lower, because being now considered as a delicacy, it has risen beyond its proportion. The mean price of corn in this period was half the present value, and the mean price of cattle one-eighth.

In the next reign, which was that of Edward III., the most necessary commodities were, in general, about three or four times cheaper than they are at present.

In these times, knights, who served on horseback in the army, had 2*s.* a day, and a foot-archer 6*d.*; which last would now be equal to a crown a day. This pay has continued nearly the same, nominally, (only that in the time of the Commonwealth the pay of the horse was advanced to 2*s.* 6*d.*, and that of the foot to 1*s.*; though it was reduced again at the Restoration), but soldiers were proportionably of a better rank formerly.

In the time of Henry VI. corn was about half its present value, other commodities much cheaper. Bishop Fleetwood has determined, from a most accurate consideration of every circumstance, that 5*l.* in this reign were equivalent to 28 or 30 now.

In the time of Henry VII. many commodities were three times as cheap here, and in all Europe, as they are at present, there having been a great increase of gold and silver in Europe since his time, occasioned by the discovery of America.

The commodities whose price has risen the most, since before the time of Henry VII., are butcher's meat, fowls, and fish; especially the latter. And the rea-

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son why corn was always much dearer in proportion to other eatables, according to their prices at present, is, that in early times agriculture was little understood. It required more labour and expense, and was more precarious than it is at present. Indeed, notwithstanding the high price of corn in the times we are speaking of, the raising of it so little answered the expense, that agriculture was almost universally quitted for grazing; which was more profitable, notwithstanding the low price of butcher's meat. So that there was constant occasion for statutes to restrain grazing, and to promote agriculture; and no effectual remedy was found till the bounty upon the exportation of corn*; since which, above ten times more corn has been raised in this country than before.

The price of corn in the time of James I., and consequently that of other necessaries of life, was not lower, but rather higher, than at present; wool is not two-thirds of the value it was then; the finer manufactures having rather sunk in price by the progress of art and industry, notwithstanding the increase of money. Butcher's meat was higher than at present. Prince Henry made an allowance of nearly 4*d.* per pound for all the beef and mutton used in his family†. This may

* By the Statutes of 1791 and 1793.—*Ed.*

† From a "parchment roll," in Dr. Birch's possession, containing, "Orders to be observed by the Prince's houshold," he has given the following regulation;

"The prices of flesh, as the Prince payeth, and the weight, as they are agreed for with the purveyors.

"An ox should weigh 600lb. the four quarters; and commonly 9*l.* 10*s.* or thereabouts.

"A mutton should weigh 46lb. or 44lb.; and they cost by the stone 2*s.* 3*d.*, the stone being 8lb.

"Veals go not by weight, but by goodness only: their price is commonly 17*s.* or thereabouts.

"Lambs at 6*s.* 8*d.* the piece."

Life of Henry Prince of Wales 1760. pp. 427, 449.—*Ed.*

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be true with respect to London; but the price of butcher's meat in the country, which does not even now much exceed this price at a medium, has certainly greatly increased of late years, and particularly in the northern counties.

The FRENCH money has suffered much more by the diminution of its value than the English. Voltaire gives the following general account of it. The numerary pound in the time of Charlemagne was 12 ounces of silver. This pound was divided into 20 sols, and the sols into 12 deniers. In Europe that sol, which was equal to a crown at present, is now no more than a light piece of copper with a mixture of at most one-eleventh of silver. The livre, which formerly represented 12 ounces of silver, is in France no more than 20 copper sols, and the denier is one-third of that base coin we call a liard. Whereas a pound sterling is worth about 22 francs of France, and the Dutch pound is nearly equal to 12. But the following table will exhibit all the successive changes of the French livre in a more particular and distinct manner.

REIGNS.	DATES.	Value in the present Money of France.			REIGNS.	DATES.	Value in the present Money of France.		
		Liv.	Sols.	Den.			Liv.	Sols.	Den.
Charlemagne from	763 to 1113	66	8	0	Charles VI.	1422	7	2	3
					Charles VII.	1461	5	13	9
					Louis XI.	1483	4	19	7
Louis VI. VII.	1113 to 1158	18	13	6	Charles VIII.	1497	4	10	7
					Louis XII.	1514	3	19	8
					Francis I.	1546	3	11	2
Philip Augustus	1222	19	18	$4\frac{4}{5}$	Henry II. and Francis II.	1559	3	6	0
St. Louis & Philip the Hardy	1226	18	4	11					
					Charles IX.	1574	2	18	7
Philip the Fair	1285	17	19	0	Henry III.	1589	2	12	11
Louis Hutin and Philip the Long	1313	18	8	10	Henry IV.	1611	2	8	0
					Louis XIII.	1642	1	15	3
Charles the Fair	1321	17	3	7	Louis XIV.	1715	1	4	11
Philip de Valois	1344	14	11	10	Louis XV.	1720	0	8	0
John	1364	9	19	$2\frac{2}{5}$	Present livre	1720	1	0	0
Charles V.	1380	9	9	8					

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Voltaire also gives us the following useful caution with respect to the computations made by several considerable French writers. Rollin, Fleury, and all the most useful writers, when they would express the value of talents, minæ, and sesterces, compute by an estimate made before the death of Colbert. But the mark of 8 ounces, which was then worth 26 francs 10 sols, is now worth 49 livres 10 sols; a difference which amounts to near one half. Without remembering this variation, we should have a very erroneous idea of the strength of ancient states, &c.

The changes in the proportion between money and commodities in France may easily be imagined to have kept pace pretty nearly with those in England, and therefore need not be particularly pointed out. Accordingly, Voltaire observes that all provisions were 8 or 10 times cheaper in proportion to the quantity of money in Charlemagne's time; but he cannot be supposed to speak very accurately, when he says that in the reign of Louis XI., who was contemporary with Edward IV., money, meaning of the same standard, was worth about double of what it is at present, and also that it was of the same value in the reign of Louis XIII., who reigned in the last year of James I. and the beginning of Charles I. For betwixt those two reigns was an interval of 150 years, in which was the discovery of America, which occasioned the greatest general alteration of the proportion between money and commodities that ever was made in this part of the world. In the former reign, therefore, the value of money must have been much greater, and perhaps in the latter reign less, than he makes it. At present the prices of commodities are higher in England than in France, besides that the poor people of France live upon much less than the poor in England, and their armies are

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maintained at less expense. It is computed by Mr. Hume*, that a British army of 20,000 men is maintained at near as great an expense as 60,000 in France, and that the English fleet in the war of 1741 required as much money to support it as all the Roman legions in the time of the emperors. However, all that we can conclude from this last article is, that money is much more plentiful in Europe at present than it was in the Roman empire.

In the 13th century the common interest which the Jews had for their money, Voltaire says, was 20 per cent. But with regard to this we must consider the great contempt that nation was always held in, the large contributions they were frequently obliged to pay, the risk they ran of never receiving the principal, the frequent confiscation of all their effects, and the violent persecutions to which they were exposed; in which circumstances it was impossible for them to lend money at all, unless for a most extravagant interest, and much disproportioned to its real value. Before the discovery of America, and the plantation of our colonies, the interest of money was generally 12 per cent. all over Europe; and it has been growing gradually less since that time, till it is now generally about 4 or 5.

When sums of money are said to be raised by a whole people, in order to form a just estimate of them, we must take into consideration not only the quantity of the precious metal, according to the standard of the coin, and the proportion of the quantity of coin to the commodities, but also the number and riches of the people who raise it. For, admitting the two circumstances which have been already explained to be the same, still populous and rich countries will much more easily raise any certain sum of money than one that

* See his *Political Discourses*, No. iii. *ad init.* and the note.—*Ed.*

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is thinly inhabited, and chiefly by poor people. This circumstance greatly adds to our surprise at the vast sums of money raised by William the Conqueror, who had a revenue nearly in value equal to 12 millions of pounds of our money (allowance being made for the standard of coin and the proportion it bore to commodities), from a country not near so populous or rich as England is at present. Indeed the accounts historians give us of the revenues of this prince, and the treasure he left behind him, are barely credible.

Next to judging of the real value of sums of money mentioned by historians, it is of importance to have just ideas of the *measures of length and capacity*, which occur in them. But these are subject to little variation, so that the common tables of those things, whether adapted to the present or former times, to our own or remote nations, are sufficient for the purpose of reading history, and require no illustration.

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PART IV.

DIRECTIONS FOR FACILITATING THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

LECTURE XVII.

In the fourth division of our subject, which we are now entering upon, I proposed to give you some directions for facilitating the study of history; both that it may more effectually answer the end proposed by it, and that you may pursue it with more satisfaction.

One of the most useful directions I can give you is to begin with authors who present you with a *compendium*, or general view of the whole subject of history; and afterwards to apply to the study of any particular history with which you choose to be more thoroughly acquainted. This is like sketching an entire outline before you finish any part of a picture, and learning the grand divisions of the earth before you study the geography of particular countries; and several very obvious advantages attend this method, to whatever it be applied.

The principal advantage of this method in studying history is, that you have hereby a clear idea of what figure the history to which you propose to give more particular attention makes in the history of the world; and by this means are enabled to judge, in some measure, of the importance of it. Besides, it will contribute greatly to your satisfaction in reading history, and answer some useful purposes in the study of it, to have some idea of the preceding, the contemporary, and

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(if it be ancient history) of the succeeding state of the world in general, and of that particular part of the world of which you are reading. Whereas that knowledge can be but very limited and scanty which is derived from ever so minute an inspection of any single portion of history. As well might we expect a good judgement of the regularity and beauty of an extensive building, from viewing a small part of it. We are only misled by such a method of study. But a close examination of particular parts is very useful after a general view of the whole of any thing.

For this reason, the history of our own country, though the most worthy of a particular study, is not proper to begin with. We can form no idea of the English nation in general and the history of it, with regard to the rest of the world, unless we can compare an idea of the whole compass of it with a like idea of the whole compass of history in general, or that of other particular nations. But when once we have gotten a general idea how the whole course of history, as we may say, lies, we apply with pleasure and advantage to the more minute consideration of our own country, and prevent any prejudice or inconvenience of any kind, which we should be exposed to from a close attention to so small a portion of history, without knowing its relation to the whole of history, of which it is a part.

This same advice is applicable to a person who proposes to study any particular *period* of the history of a particular country. Let him first make himself acquainted with the history of the country in general, and then study the history of the particular period. It is but a very imperfect idea that a person could get of the history of the civil wars in England, during the reign of Charles I, for instance, from reading such a

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single history as that of Clarendon, were the performance ever so excellent, while confined to the occurrences of that time. We ought to go very far back in our history to have a just idea of the true state of the parties that existed in those times, and the opposition of which occasioned such a dreadful convulsion in the English government.

I may add, that it is men's forming their notions of such times as these from detached pieces, particularly such as are written by the known friends of one or other of the parties, from professed panegyrics or invectives, or from sermons (which are almost always one or the other of them, and generally the extremes of the one or the other), that they are more than misled in their ideas of these times. From this method of forming ideas of history is derived much of the bigotry and spirit of faction, which have prevailed in this or any other nation. This advice, therefore, to peruse some account of the whole of history before you apply to any particular history, and the whole of any particular history before you study any particular period of it, is of more importance than at first sight it appears to be.

This general acquaintance with the whole course of history will make it less necessary to attend to the *order* in which particular histories are read; because a person thus prepared will be able to refer any particular history he takes up to its proper place in universal history. And though particular histories be read without any regard to the order of time or place, they will easily range themselves, as we may say, without any confusion, in their proper place in his mind.

Besides, universal history is an immense field, with which the compass of no single life is sufficient to bring a man even tolerably acquainted. Since, therefore, it is only a part of history that any person can propose

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to make himself intimately acquainted with, it is of advantage to be able to choose the most important part, and what is most worthy of his attention, which he will be able to do from having a general idea of the whole subject of history in its proper order and connexion.

The most celebrated epitome of universal history written in Latin is *Turselin's* *, which is read in most of the foreign universities. It is indeed a judicious and elegant performance †; but in almost every page of the modern parts there are such marks of strong attachment to the principles of popery, as cannot but give disgust to a zealous protestant. Bossuet's epitome of universal history is greatly and deservedly admired in France; but it brings the history no lower than the time of Charlemagne. One of the most useful epitomes, upon the whole, is that written by baron Holberg in Latin, and translated, with improvements, into English by Gregory Sharpe ‡. The principal defect in it is, that too little notice is taken of the history of Greece. The most valuable of the larger kind of epitomes are Rollin's of the ancient history, and Puffendorf's of the modern.

One of the most obvious contrivances to reduce history into a short compass, and to make an entire course of it easy to be comprehended, and at the same time to observe a proper distinction between the parts of it, has been by CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES; and if they consist of nothing more than an enumeration of the capital

* Horace Tursellin, a Jesuit, born at Rome, where he died in 1599, aged 54. His *Abridgement of Universal History, from the Beginning of the World to* 1598, was continued by Briet to 1665, and translated into French by Lagreau, with valuable notes. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1789. ix. 223. —*Ed.*

† The French biographer, to whom I have just now referred, will not allow this *epitome* to be *judicious*; and finds in it nothing to praise, except "la belle latinité."—*Ed.*

‡ See *supra*, p. 28. note.—*Ed.*

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events in history, thrown together promiscuously, without any distinction of kingdoms, regard being only had to the order of time in which the events happened, they have their use. We thereby see the principal things that history exhibits, and from the dates annexed to each article may form an idea of the interval of time between each of them. Such tables as these are published along with a variety of single histories, to which, indeed, they are particularly suited. Such is the *Short Chronicle* prefixed to *Newton's Chronology*.

But when a history is very complex, it may easily be conceived to be a great advantage to have the separate parts kept distinct, by being arranged in different columns. By this means we have a distinct idea of the course of any single history, and at the same time a clear comparative view of the contemporary state of any other history which runs parallel with it. The confusion attending the neglect of this method may be seen in the chronological tables published with the *Universal History*, and the advantage of adopting it, in such tables as *Marshall's* *, *Tallents's* †, &c. Indeed those adapted to the Universal History could not have been brought into any tolerable compass on a more distinct and perfect plan.

Besides a distinct view of the succession of events in different histories, it is an advantage to have, in separate columns, an account of the *great men*, in arts or arms, which each age has produced. This has been exhibited by the last-mentioned authors and others.

* *Tabulæ Chronologicæ, continentes tum Sacra, tum Profana maxime notatu digna, à creatione Mundi usque ad Christi nativitatem.* By Benjamin Marshall. Oxf. 1713.—*Ed.*

† Francis Tallents, a Nonconformist divine, who died in 1708, aged 89. He published, in a Chronological Table, a *View of Universal History, from the Creation to the Destruction of Jerusalem by Adrian in the Year of the World* 4084, *and the Year of Christ* 135. Also a *View of Universal History, from the Birth of J. C. to the Year* 1680.—*Ed.*

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Two columns are quite sufficient for this purpose; one for *statesmen* and *warriors*, and the other for *men of learning*.

Another improvement in chronological tables has been to annex a variety of *dates*, in distinct columns, to every event, to save the reader the trouble of reducing the different methods of computation to one another. But many chronologers have multiplied these different epochas far beyond any real use, so as greatly to encumber their page, and leave little room for more valuable matter. *Helvicus**, among others, is an example of this. Four æras are abundantly sufficient; namely, the year before and after Christ; and the Julian period to run through the whole extent of the work; the Olympiads for the course of the Grecian history, and the year of the city for the Roman. These are used by Blair†.

The last and capital improvement in chronological tables, which has been effected in some measure by Tallents and Marshall, more perfectly in *Helvicus*, but most completely by *Blair*, is to dispose the events in such a manner, as that the distance at which they are placed, without attending to the date in the margin, shall give a just idea of the real interval of time between them. This is done by having a single line, or any set space, appropriated to any certain period of time, or number of years.

In the chronological tables engraved by *Sturt*‡

* Christopher Helvicus, a Professor at Giessen, who died in 1616, aged 35. His *Theatrum Historicum, sive Chronologiæ Systema Novum*, was published at Oxford with a Continuation by J. B. Scuppius in 1651 and 1661. There was an English translation in 1687.—*Ed.*

† Rev. John Blair, L.L.D., F.R.S., &c. who died 1782. His *Chronology and History of the World, from the Creation to the Year of Christ* 1753, has been continued to 1814.—*Ed.*

‡ John Sturt died in 1730, aged 72. He was much employed on biblical subjects.—*Ed.*

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we see a great deal of matter, by a singular method, and the help of arbitrary and symbolical characters, crowded into a short compass; so that we see the state of the several kingdoms of Europe for any century since the Christian æra, in a single page. This author has also annexed an alphabetical index to his work, in which, by the help of symbols, he has expressed the character of every Prince mentioned in his tables, and the principal events of his life. This small work is valuable for its conciseness, but is not so much recommended by its distinctness.

Very much of the perspicuity of history depends on conceiving clearly the order of *generations* and the *right of succession* in regal and other families, *i. e.* in what manner the great personages who have been competitors for crowns, or rivals in power, were related to one another. In this respect GENEALOGICAL TABLES are of unspeakable use. Indeed it is not possible, by words, to give so easy and perfect a view of the descent of families, as by the help of lines and figures. For local position is apprehended entirely, with whatever can be represented by it, at one view, and without the least danger of mistake; whereas, if the history of family connexions, which is necessarily a very complex and intricate thing, be expressed in words, we see only a part at a time; and before the whole can be laid before us, in this slow manner, some essential circumstance will have been forgotten.

The most natural order of genealogical tables seems to be to place the common stock at the head of the table, and the several descents, or succeeding generations, each in a lower line appropriated to it; and not to make the order of generations proceed from the left hand to the right, as is done by some. But every distinct generation should by all means be placed in a line, or space, appropriated to itself: otherwise, our

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ideas will be greatly confused. The *order* of *birth* in the same generation may easily be observed (as is done in some of our best tables) by placing the first-born to the left hand in the table, and the rest, according to the order of birth, to the right.

There are a variety of other relations, besides mere natural descent, which it is very useful to have a clear idea of; as the connexion by marriage, by adoption among the Romans, &c. by which different families are intermixed. And it is possible, by different kinds of lines, joining the names so connected, how remote soever, in the table of generation, to express all these relations without the use of words. But as the attempt to express them all by characters disfigures the table with a great variety of lines, many of them of considerable length, and extending themselves in every direction, it seems most convenient to express *natural descent* only by characters, and to subjoin to each name an account in words of all its other connexions, referring at most from one to another by *marks* contrived for that purpose. This method Rapin has taken in the excellent genealogical tables in his history of England.

Some valuable tables of genealogy may be seen at the end of *Petavius's Chronology**: but the largest and most complete body of genealogies is that published by *Anderson*†; which, in one large volume folio, contains all the genealogies he could collect from the whole body of history, ancient and modern ‡.

* *Tabulæ Chronologicæ Regum Dynastarum, Urbium, &c., à mundo condito.* Wesel 1702. Denis Petau (*Petavius*) was a very learned Jesuit, who died in 1652, aged 69.—*Ed.*

† *Royal Genealogies, or the Genealogical Tables of Emperors, Kings and Princes, from Adam to these times*, 1732: by James Anderson.—*Ed.*

‡ It comes, however, no lower than to A. D. 1732; and it is too much crowded with history, which gives it a confused appearance. The tables of Mr. Betham are, in this and other respects, a great improvement on those of Mr. Anderson, and come to A. D. 1795.—*Amer. Edit.*

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LECTURE XVIII.

THE most ingenious and useful contrivance to facilitate the study of history, and to aid the imagination in conceiving distinctly, and comprehending the whole course of it, in all its parts, co-existent and successive, is the *chart of history* lately (1765) imported from France. This is properly a picture of all history, and is made by such natural methods of expression, that it renders visible to the eye, without reading, the whole figure and dimensions of all history, general and particular; and so perfectly shows the origin, progress, extent, and duration of all kingdoms and states that ever existed, at one view, with every circumstance of time and place, uniting chronology and geography, that it not only in the most agreeable manner refreshes the memory, without the fatigue of reading; but a novice in history may learn more from it by a mere attentive inspection of a few hours, than he can acquire by the reading of many weeks or months.

This chart will not, indeed, give a person the knowledge of any thing that passed *within* a kingdom, and which produced no actual alteration in the extent of its territories, or of the manner in which conquests were made or lost. But a person may by the help of it gain a clearer idea *when*, and *by what nations* conquests were made, how far they extended, and how long they continued, than he could ever get by reading.

It is obvious to remark, that this chart must answer, in the completest manner imaginable, almost every use of a compendium of history, proper to be read before a larger and fuller course be entered upon; and it will prevent any confusion which might arise from reading particular histories without a regard to their proper order of time or place, better than any abstract of uni-

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versal history whatever. For it is but casting our eye for a minute upon this chart, and we see, at one glance, the contemporary state of the whole world at the period of which we are reading, and the preceding and succeeding state of the particular country, the history of which we are studying.

It is an inconvenience in this particular chart, that *different scales* are made use of to represent the same number of years in different parts of it; so that the same distance, as seen by the eye, does not represent the same portion of time in every part of it. This might easily have been obviated by doubling the width of the chart, or, at most, by omitting the earlier and obscure part of the history*.

The state of the world, with respect to the *persons* who have made the greatest figure in it, may be exhibited with much more ease and advantage by means of *lines* and *spaces*, than the state of the world even with respect to the different powers to which the parts of it have been subject. For whereas, in this, regard must be had to both the circumstances of *time* and *place* (not to say that, in many cases, it is not easy to determine when territories were really acquired or lost), with regard to *single lives*, the circumstance of *time* only is to be taken in.

If, therefore, every man's life be expressed by *a line* proportioned to the length of it, and all the lines be

* Since this was written I have published *A New Chart of History*, in which I have avoided the faults above mentioned, and have introduced several improvements. It is of the same size with my *Chart of Biography*, drawn upon the same scale, and made to correspond to it in all respects. —*Edit.* 1793.

This Chart also, as well as that of Biography, is now brought down to A. D. 1800.—*Amer. Edit.*

A New Chart of History was published in 1812, by Francis Baily, who professed to have made considerable improvements on the Chart by Priestley.—*Ed.*

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adapted to the same scale, and terminated in their proper places with regard to universal time, such *a chart of biography* will exhibit, in the clearest manner imaginable, without reading, the entire succession of great men in every age and of every profession, with the relative length of their lives. So that if we attend to any period of time, we not only see who flourished in it, but how all their ages stood with respect to one another; whereby we not only see who were a man's contemporaries, but also how far any of them was before him, or how far after him, in the order of their births or deaths; which will be of use to assist us in judging of the advantages or disadvantages they respectively lay under with regard to knowledge and instruction.

How much more readily, and with how much less fatigue of the imagination, lines thus disposed will suggest the idea of the relative length of men's lives, may be conceived from this circumstance, that the names of the *numbers* which express the time of a person's birth and death, do not suggest a definite idea of the interval between them, till they be reduced to the idea of *extension;* an expedient which, I believe, all persons naturally and mechanically have recourse to. Our idea of *time* is always that of a *line*, and a longer or shorter space of time is represented in our minds by the idea of a longer or shorter line; so that in this method, the process of the mind, of reducing intervals of time to lines, is superseded, and done in a more accurate manner than any person could do it in his own mind, for himself.

Moreover, a biographical chart of this kind, filled with names properly selected, in every kind of eminence, will exhibit what ages have abounded most with great men, and what were barren of them; and

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this in a more comprehensive and distinct manner than can be acquired by reading; a view which cannot fail agreeably to amuse a speculative mind.

It will be a necessary and remediless defect in every chart of this nature, that the time of the death, and especially of the birth of many persons cannot be found. But then it will be easy to contrive proper characters to express the uncertainty there may be with respect to either of these particulars.

It hardly need be mentioned, that it cannot be expected that such a chart as this should be drawn up according to the real *merit* of the persons inserted in it. Besides, it is a regard to *celebrity* only that can make it of any use to a reader of history. A chart of real merit would, no doubt, be very different from this. Many names which make the greatest figure in the *tablet of fame* would not be found in that of merit; and again, many names would be seen in that of merit, which no person who became acquainted with men by fame only would have any knowledge of *.

In this enumeration of the methods to illustrate and retain history, we must by no means forget the ingenious Dr. Grey's † *memorial lines*, of such admirable use to recollect *dates* with exactness. Of all things, there is the greatest difficulty in retaining *numbers*. They are like grains of sand, which will not cohere in the order in which we place them; but by transmuting *figures* into *letters*, which easily cohere in every form of combination, we fix and retain numbers in the mind with the same ease and certainty with which we remember words. Thus when Dr. Grey, in his *Me-*

* Such a *Chart of Biography* as this, I have drawn up and published; and a specimen of it, and also one of the *Chart of History*, are given with this work.

† Richard Grey, D.D., died in 1771, aged 77.—*Ed.*

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*moria Technica**, annexes a chronological date to the termination of the name, it is only pronouncing it with his variation, and we instantly recollect its proper date. For example, if we can remember that Dr. Grey calls Rome *Romput* (which the very oddness of the variation will make us less liable to forget), since he makes (*p*) to stand for 7, (*u*) for 5, and (*t*) for 3, we immediately recollect, that 753 before Christ is the date usually assigned to the building of Rome. If, moreover, we can learn to repeat the names of kings in the order in which he has digested them (which his verses, rough as they are, make it pretty easy to do), we shall have not only the years when each of them began their reigns, but also the order of their succession.

As this method is so easily learned, and may be of so much use in recollecting dates, when other methods are not at hand, particularly in conversation upon the subject of history, when dates are often wanted, I think all persons of a liberal education inexcusable, who will not take the small degree of pains that is necessary to make themselves masters of it; or who think any thing mean, or unworthy of their notice, which is so useful and convenient.

Dr. Grey's attempt to apply this method to the numbers which occur in astronomy, tables of weights and measures, &c., is likewise extremely useful; but his application of it to geography is unnatural and useless.

In order to secure the most valuable fruits of history, it is absolutely necessary that they be reposited in a *common-place book*. For the memory of no person whatever, who reads much history, is sufficient to re-

* First published in 1730. The method of that work has been illustrated by Mr. Feinagle, whose pupils of both sexes a few years since exhibited, in public, various surprising efforts of artificial memory.—*Ed.*

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tain all he reads, or even the most valuable part of it. The easiest method I can direct you to for making a common-place book for this purpose is the following. Whenever you meet with any fact which you wish to preserve, put it down under some general head, as *religion, government, commerce, war,* &c., reserving every two opposite pages in your book for one of these heads, and note it in a separate place, at the end or beginning of the book, with the page in which it may be found; and when any two pages are filled, either open two other pages with the same title; or, if you perceive that the title you first began with was too comprehensive, divide it into whatever parts you think most convenient. If these titles should grow so numerous as that any of them cannot easily be found in the promiscuous manner in which they were first set down, it will be easy at any time to reduce them to the order of the alphabet in another page; and the former, which will then be superfluous, may be cancelled*.

LECTURE XIX.

The Terms of Fortification explained, by the Help of a Model of all its Varieties cut in Wood; to enable young Gentlemen to understand modern History and the Newspapers, and to judge of the progress of a siege†.

* N.B. Let the person who gives this Lecture and the preceding come to his class prepared to exhibit the different *Tables*, &c. explained, or mentioned in it.

† My custom was to explain the *model*, without having any thing written to read on the subject. The terms belonging to the art of *Fortification* are easily learned from books.

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LECTURE XX.

As a regular progression in any thing is generally agreeable; and we are carried along the course of history (to use a metaphor) with more pleasure, when we go uniformly with the *current of time*, and are not carried backward and forward in the course of our reading; I shall, for the sake of those who have opportunity and leisure to go to the sources of ancient history, give, from *Wheare's Lectures on History*, published by Bohun*, a method in which the principal authors of antiquity may be read, so as to collect from them a pretty regular series of facts, which will comprise the history of Asia, Africa, Greece, and Rome, till the dissolution of the empire of Constantinople. And, for the sake of those who do not choose to depend on *compilers* for the history of their own country, I shall likewise name the original authors of the English history in the order in which they may be read, according to the time of which they treat.

I shall also take this opportunity of noting a few of the most necessary observations on the characters of the principal historians; and to the accounts of each author in the regular series of the ancient historians, I shall subjoin an account of those other authors, and passages of other historians, which may be of use to enlarge and complete the history of the period he treats of; that any person may either read the principal au-

* Degory Wheare, who died in 1647, aged 74, was Camdenian Professor of History at Oxford. His work entitled *Lectiones Hiemales, de ratione et methodo legendi Historias Civiles et Ecclesiasticas*, was published in 1684. The translation by Edmund Bohun, (1698,) is entitled *The Method and Order of Reading both Civil and Ecclesiastical Histories.—Ed.*

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thors only, which follow one another in the order of time, or may, as he has opportunity, get a fuller and more satisfactory knowledge from the other authors of any particular period, before he proceeds to another. I shall also carefully distinguish the subjects of every history, and the period of time in which it falls, compared with the time in which the author lived, as one circumstance proper to be taken into consideration in judging of the credibility of any historian.

As the histories of Greece and Rome have little or no connexion till the final conquest of Greece by the Romans, I shall often depart from the strict order of time, not to interrupt the order of reading the Grecian and Asiatic history by a regard to the contemporary history of Rome, but begin the Roman history after the conquest of Greece.

The oldest history extant, next to the historical books of the Old Testament, is that of *Herodotus* of Halicarnassus, who flourished about 450 years before the Christian æra, a little after the invasion of Greece by Xerxes. His history comprises probably every thing he had an opportunity of learning concerning the history of the Lydians, Ionians, Lycians, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, and Macedonians. Computing from the earliest of his accounts to the latest, his history may be reckoned to commence about 713, and to reach to about 479 B. C.; a period of about 234 years.

This author was never charged with partiality except by Plutarch with regard to the Bœotians only*, which is not worth our notice, since the Bœotians were Plutarch's countrymen, and he could not bear that any reflection, though ever so just, should be cast upon them. But he is generally thought to be too fond of the mar-

* Plutarch's charge is more general. See his *Morals*; on Herodotus.—*Ed.*

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vellous*. It is certain that he has inserted many fabulous things in his history, though very often with sufficient intimations of his own disbelief, or suspicion of them†. And it is an argument greatly in favour of this ancient writer, that his chronology requires less correction, according to Newton's canons, than that of any subsequent Greek historian. The greatest inconvenience attending the reading of him arises from his *method*, which is the most irregular and digressive that can be conceived; some entire histories coming in as it were by way of *parentheses* in the bodies of others. But with all his faults he is a most pleasing writer.

A more particular account of several things in the period of which Herodotus treats may be extracted from the following authors. *Justin* (B. i. ii. iii. vii.). Xenophon's *Cyropædia*. The lives of Aristides, Themistocles, Cimon, Miltiades, and Pausanias, written by *Plutarch* and *Cornelius Nepos*. And those of Anaximander, Zeno, Empedocles, Heraclitus, and Democritus, by *Diogenes Laertius*.

LECTURE XXI.

NEXT to Herodotus, *Thucydides* is to be read. He proposed to write the history of the Peloponnesian war; but introductory to this, his principal and professed

* To his indulgence of this propensity Juvenal is supposed to have alluded in those well known lines. *Sat.* x.

"Creditur olim
Velificatus Athos, et quicquid Græcia mendax
Audet in historia."—*Ed.*

† It has been justly remarked, that "if Herodotus believed all he wrote, we must condemn him for his credulity; a fault from which every historian ought to be free:—if he did not, he discovers a great want of judgement in mixing what is fabulous and absurd with what is true." See *Remarks on the very inferior Utility of Classical Learning*, by W. Stevenson, 1796, p. 10.—*Ed.*

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subject, he gives a summary view of the history of Greece from the departure of Xerxes to the commencement of that war, which connects his history with that of Herodotus. His history, however, reaches no further than the 21st year of the Peloponnesian war.

Thucydides was an Athenian, and employed by his country in some command in the war of which he treats; but not being crowned with success, in an undertaking to which the forces he was entrusted with were not equal, he was deprived of his command by that inconstant people, and obliged to take refuge among the Lacedæmonians.

It is impossible to discover any marks of partiality in this writer, notwithstanding we cannot read him without making ourselves a party with the Athenians. There is all the appearance imaginable of the strictest fidelity, and the most punctual adherence to truth in his history; notwithstanding he was probably the first historian who introduced the unnatural custom of putting rhetorical and fictitious harangues into the mouths of his principal actors. For the speeches which occur in Herodotus, who wrote before him, are more like conversation than formal harangues, and, compared with these, deserve not the name of *speeches*.

The exactness of Thucydides, in observing chronological order, in his history of the events of a very various and complex scene of actions, obliges him to interrupt the thread of his narration in a method that is very painful and disagreeable to a reader. But notwithstanding this, his history is extremely interesting.

To complete the period of the history of which Thucydides treats, after his 1st book, let the 11th and 12th of *Diodorus Siculus* be read, together with *Plutarch's* Themistocles, Aristides, Pausanias, and Cimon, and the 2nd and 3rd books of *Justin*. And after the whole of

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Thucydides, read the lives of Alcibiades, Chabrias, Thrasybulus, and Lysias, written by *Plutarch* or *Cornelius Nepos*, the 4th and 5th books of *Justin*, and the 1st book of *Orosius*.

Next to Thucydides, let the 1st and 2nd books of *Xenophon's History of Greece* be read. This completes the history of the Peloponnesian war, with the contemporary affairs of the Medes and Persians. After this, let him proceed to the *Expedition of Cyrus*, and the return of the Greeks; and lastly, the remainder of his history of Greece, which contains an account of the affairs of the Greeks and Persians to the battle of Mantinæa, which happened 363 B. C.; so that all the historical books of Xenophon comprise a period of about 48 years.

Xenophon's history is properly that of his own times; and as he was the first general and philosopher, as well as best historian, of his age, he had the best opportunity of being acquainted with, and the best capacity of judging of, every thing of which he writes. With regard to his country, he was in circumstances very similar to those of Thucydides, and he appears to be equally impartial. But he is much happier in the simplicity, as well as true elegance, of his style and manner. He seems to keep a medium between the loose excursive manner of Herodotus, and the extreme rigour of Thucydides, whose formal harangues he has likewise, in a great measure, dropped. But a barrenness of remarkable events in the history of Greece of which he treats, as well as the mangled state in which his works have come down to us, makes his history less engaging, and I believe less generally read, than either of the fore-mentioned authors. But his *Anabasis*, in which he relates the adventures of a body of 10,000 Greeks under his own command, in

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their return to Greece from the very heart of the Persian empire, is highly engaging. As for his history of *Cyrus the Elder*, it has all the appearance of being composed with a view to exhibit the most perfect idea he could conceive of an accomplished prince, both with respect to the arts of peace and war.

To complete the history of all that period of which Xenophon treats, read the lives of Lysander, Agesilaus, Artaxerxes, Thrasybulus, Chabrias, Conon, and Datames, written by *Plutarch*, or *Cornelius Nepos;* the 4th and 5th books of *Justin*, and the 13th, 14th, and part of the 15th of *Diodorus Siculus*.

After Xenophon's works, read the remainder of the 15th, and the 16th book of *Diodorus Siculus*, which contain the histories of Greece and Persia from the battle of Mantinæa to the beginning of the reign of Alexander the Great, 336 B. C.

Diodorus flourished in the time of Julius Cæsar and Augustus. He spared no pains or expense in reading or travelling, to collect materials for an universal history, from the earliest account of things to his own times; and the small remains we have of it bear sufficient marks of his great labour and fidelity. But the merit of that part of his immense and valuable work which has come down to us, is that of a faithful compiler. For all the last books of his history are, in all probability, irrecoverably lost; though there are some who pretend* that they still may be extant in some obscure part of Sicily. Of 40 books, of which the entire work consisted, the first 5, which bring the history of the world to the Trojan war, are entire. The next 5 are wanting; but from the 11th to the 20th inclusive, the work is complete. The history of those

* On the authority of Henry Stephens. See *Biographia Classica*, 1750, ii. 61.—*Ed.*

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2 books of Diodorus will be more complete by reading the lives of Chabrias, Dion, Ephicrates, Timotheus, Phocion, and Timoleon, written by *Cornelius Nepos*.

After these 2 books of Diodorus Siculus, read *Arrian's history of Alexander*. To make this history more complete, read also *Quintus Curtius*, the 10th and 11th books of *Justin*, and *Plutarch's* life of Alexander.

As great an encourager as Alexander the Great was of learned men, in an age which abounded with them, he has been so unfortunate, that none of the many histories of his exploits which were written by his contemporaries have reached our times; a misfortune which, it is remarkable, he shares in common with Augustus and Trajan, who were nearly in the same circumstances. The oldest of the histories of Alexander now extant are those of Quintus Curtius, and Arrian, who lived 400 years after his death. The history of Arrian is an evident, and, in all appearance, a faithful compilation from authors of the best authority, and who lived nearest the times of Alexander; particularly from the commentaries of Aristobulus and Ptolemy Lagus. He has so happily succeeded in a studied imitation of the style and manner of Xenophon, that he is often called the young Xenophon. There is also extant an history of India by this author. The least praise of Arrian is that of an historian. His *Enchiridion*, which is a compendium of Epictetus's philosophy, has ever been acknowledged to be the most beautiful piece of ancient heathen morality.

The history of Quintus Curtius is, upon the whole, an agreeable performance; but there appears to be too great a display of oratory, an affectation of fine thoughts, shining expressions, and eloquent speeches,

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upon every occasion, to make it thoroughly satisfactory as a history.

After Arrian, read the 18th, 19th, and 20th books of *Diodorus Siculus*, which contain the history of Greece from 323 B. C. to 301 B. C.; and, to complete this period, read also the 13th, 14th, and 15th books of *Justin*, and the Demetrius and Eumenes of *Plutarch*.

After the above-mentioned books of Diodorus, read from the 16th to the 29th book inclusive of *Justin*, which rings down the history to about 195 B. C. Justin lived under Antoninus Pius, about 150 A. C. His history is only an *abridgement*, and as it were the *contents* of what must have been an immense and valuable work of *Trogus Pompeius*; being a complete universal history, from the earliest account of things to his own time, which was that of Augustus. Justin has drawn up his *compendium* with a great deal of propriety and elegance, and it is a very proper book to introduce young persons to the knowledge of history.

After the fore-mentioned books of Justin, read *Plutarch's* Lives of Pyrrhus, Aratus, Agis, Cleomenes, and Philopœmen.

The lives of illustrious men written by Plutarch, who flourished under the emperor Adrian, about 130 A. C., make an excellent supplement to universal history. Being more a philosopher than an historian, his lives of illustrious men consist chiefly of such particular incidents as lead us to form the clearest idea of their tempers, characters, and views.

Cornelius Nepos, a writer of the Augustan age, who preceded Plutarch nearly on the same plan, exhibits an agreeable compendium of the chief transactions, and a clear view of the characters, of the principal he-

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roes of ancient times, and, like Plutarch, is also usefully read by way of supplement to more regular histories.

To complete the history contained in those lives of Plutarch, read the fragments of *Diodorus*.

Lastly, in the regular order of history, read the 30th book of *Justin*, and all that follow till the 2 last, which completes the history of Greece, till it mixes with that of the Romans.

All the histories mentioned in this lecture are written in Greek, except those of Justin, Quintus Curtius, and Cornelius Nepos, which are in Latin.

LECTURE XXII.

As the authors of whom an account was given in the preceding lecture contain not only the history of Greece, but that of all the nations of the world that were known to the historians; so the following course of *Roman history* must likewise be considered as comprehending all that is now to be learned of the subsequent ancient history of all other nations. Indeed, the connexions of the Romans were so extensive, that a complete history of their affairs could be nothing else than a history of the world; at least of that part of it which is most worth our notice. In reality, we know nothing of the history of any ancient nations after the establishment of the Roman empire, but in consequence of their connexion with the Romans. The writers of the Roman history I shall give an account of in the order in which they are to be read, without any formal transition from one to another.

The writer who treats of the early part of the Roman history, in the fullest and most satisfactory manner, is *Dionysius* of Halicarnassus, an excellent rhe-

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torician as well as historian. He came to Rome in the reign of Augustus, and spent 22 years there, principally with a view to acquaint himself, from the source of information, with the antiquities and customs of the Romans. His entire work consisted of 20 books, and brought down the history of Rome as far as the beginning of the first Punic war. But of these, only the 11 first are now extant, and they end 412 A. U. C., 341 B. C., the time when the consuls resumed the chief authority in the Republic after the dissolution of the decemvirate.

This writer was furnished with all the lights that could be procured to conduct him through his undertaking, having the assistance of the most learned and eminent of the Romans in every thing in which they could be serviceable to him; and he is generally thought to have made the most of the authorities he could procure, in the great scarcity of ancient records which we have before observed to have been at Rome. But what we are most indebted to Dionysius for, is the description he has given of the manners, customs, and laws of the Romans, as observed by himself, and which no Roman writers have mentioned. Indeed, such particulars as these we could not so reasonably expect from a native, writing for the use of his countrymen (who must have been as well acquainted with them as himself), as from a foreigner, writing for the use of foreigners, to whom every thing of that kind would be new and entertaining.

Notwithstanding Dionysius lived in an enlightened age, and he seems desirous to transmit nothing but well attested facts, he has not escaped the charge of the most egregious credulity in his account of some of the prodigies, with which all the Roman histories abound, particularly when he tells us that, by the

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command of Nævius Actius the augur, a razor cut a whetstone; that Castor and Pollux fought in person for the Romans against the Latins; that two rivers turned their course to favour the inhabitants of Cumæ; and that a statue of Fortune spoke certain words twice over.

The style of this author, though his language be truly Attic, does not quite answer the expectations he naturally raises by his criticisms on the style of other historians, and his rules for the proper style of history. For though his Attic phrases are allowed to be elegant, the best critics complain of a singularity, and a particular roughness, in the general turn of his sentences.

To complete the history of the period of which Dionysius treats, read *Livy*, B. i. ii. iii., *Plutarch's* Romulus, Numa Pompilius, Valerius Poplicola, Coriolanus, and Camillus.

After Dionysius, read from the 4th to the 10th book inclusive, of Livy, which brings the history of Rome to 451 A. U. C., and 292 B. C.

Livy was a native of Padua; but upon undertaking to write the Roman history (a work in which he was wholly employed for more than 22 years) he came, in the reign of Augustus, to live at Rome, for the convenience of having recourse to the most proper materials for his work, particularly those records which were preserved in the Capitol; and having collected every thing which he thought to his purpose, he retired to Naples, that he might prosecute his studies without interruption.

All the time he was engaged in this work he lived a retired sedentary life. But though we never read either of his having ever travelled, or being employed in any command in the army, or any other department of public business, it is remarkable that this defect is

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not perceived in his history. His description of places is as exact as if he had visited them himself; and he describes a siege, and the arrangement of an army, with the greatest propriety and judgement. It is not improbable but he might be assisted in those parts of his work by persons who were better acquainted with the subjects of them than he himself could be. When he was at Rome, he enjoyed the favour of Augustus, who gave him every opportunity of furnishing himself with the knowledge necessary to his design.

The entire work of Livy consisted of 142 books; but of these only 35 are left, viz. the 1st, the 3rd, the 4th, and half of the 5th decade; but the epitome of them all by another hand is extant.

All the ancients are unanimous in giving the most ample testimony to the noble and generous impartiality of this writer; who, though he lived in the reign of Augustus, had the courage to do justice to the characters of Pompey, Cicero, Brutus, and Cassius. But, probably with a view to add to the solemnity of his history, he takes every opportunity of inserting accounts of omens and prodigies, and some, as they appear to us, of the lowest and most ridiculous nature. Indeed, with respect both to the materials of his history, and the style and manner of composition, Livy seems to have studied grandeur and magnificence. With all the marks of real modesty and greatness of mind, he every where preserves an uniform energy and majesty of style, to which the length and fulness of his periods does not a little contribute; and every part is as elaborate and highly finished as possible.

To supply the chasm between the 10th and 20th books of Livy, read *Polybius*, particularly books 1st and 2nd, which treat chiefly of the first Punic war; the epitome of the 2nd decade of Livy, *Justin*, books 17th, 18th,

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22nd, and 23d; 14 chapters of the 4th book of *Orosius*, the 4th and 5th of the 3d book of the *Historia Miscellanea* of Paulus Diaconus, *Plutarch's* Marcellus, and Fabius Maximus; the 2nd tome of the annals of *Zonaras*, and *Appian's* Punic and Illyrian wars.

Polybius was an Arcadian. He flourished 216 B.C., was of the first note in his age as a soldier, statesman, and philosopher. He came to Rome on an embassy, and there became very intimate with Scipio Africanus the younger, and Lælius, whose inseparable companion he was in all their expeditions.

His history consisted originally of 40 books, of which the eighth part only is remaining to us entire, and comprehends a space of 53 years, the greatest part of it employed in the history of those events of which he was an eye-witness, and in the conduct of which he had a considerable share.

The pains which this writer took to inform himself of the things and places of which he writes was prodigious. He crossed the Alps, and traversed one part of Gaul, on purpose to represent truly Hannibal's passage in Italy; and fearing to omit the least circumstance of Scipio's actions, he travelled all over Spain, and stopped particularly at New Carthage, that he might carefully study the situation of it; and even used Scipio's authority to procure vessels to sail upon the Atlantic ocean, with some view to the history he was writing. He learned the Roman tongue, and obtained a perfect knowledge of their laws, their rites, their customs, and antiquities; and having gained permission from the senate to search the Capitol, he made himself familiar with their records, and translated them into his mother-tongue.

However, though in a perfect acquaintance with his

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subject, and especially as a judge of every thing relating to it, he was superior to almost all other ancient historians, he is inferior to most of them in point of eloquence; and it appears not to have been without justice that Dionysius of Halicarnassus calls him unpolite, and reproaches him with negligence, both in the choice of his words and the structure of his periods. His observations and reflections (which frequently interrupt the course of his narration, and take up great part of his work) appear tedious to those who are impatient to go on with the history, but are universally admired by the thoughtful and judicious.

Orosius was a Christian presbyter, who flourished about A. D. 416, and wrote 7 books of history against the Pagans.

Appian was descended from one of the chief families of Alexandria. He came to Rome in the time of the emperor Trajan, where he practised the law, and distinguished himself so much as a pleader, that he was advanced to some office in the government; and by the succeeding emperors Adrian and Antoninus Pius, to the highest dignities of the empire.

Of the many works which he composed, there remain at this time but the least part, viz. his history of the Punic, Syrian, Parthian, Mithridatic, and Spanish wars, the 5th book of the civil wars, and those of Illyricum.

Whatever reflection it may be upon him as a man, it ought to be no objection with us to the history of Appian, that he has been suspected of copying a good deal from the Commentaries of Augustus, and other writers whose works are now lost; and this circumstance may have occasioned some little inequality in his style. This, however, is only what some critics pretend to have observed, and his style is allowed to be,

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upon the whole, very plain and suited to his subject. His method of preserving the transactions of every particular country distinct from those of every other is thought to have some advantages, and he is allowed to be particularly happy in his descriptions of battles, and in every respect to have given the greatest proof of his knowledge in the art of war.

After Appian, should be read the remainder of *Livy*, from the 21st book to the end, which brings the history to A. U. C. 587, B. C. 166, and the epitome of Livy to the end.

To complete the last books of Livy, read *Plutarch's* Hannibal, Scipio Africanus, Quintus Flaminius, Paulus Æmilius, and Cato Major. After this, read his Gracchi, Marius, Sylla, Cato Minor, Sartorius, Lucullus, Pompey, and Brutus.

LECTURE XXIII.

THE reader of history must now proceed to *Sallust's* history of the war of Jugurtha, which happened 100 B. C., and of the conspiracy of Catiline, which happened 62 B. C.

Sallust was a Roman, descended of a family which had long made a figure in the equestrian order. He was a man of profligate morals, and the early part of his life was spent in the pursuits of ambition; but not succeeding in his attempts to be a leading man in the government of the state, he retired with a discontent which shows itself, both in the general severity of his language, and his frequent keen invectives against the times in which he lived. He was a great enemy of Cicero (whose wife Terentia he married after Cicero had divorced her), and the friend of Cæsar, who was a great admirer of him. By Cæsar he was entrusted

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with the command of some forces, and a province, in which, by his excessive rapaciousness, he grew so rich, that, upon his return, he purchased one of the noblest mansions in Rome, which to this day is called the gardens of Sallust.

The history of the war of Jugurtha, and of the Catilinarian conspiracy, are all that we have left of this historian. Nothing at all is left of that excellent history which procured him the title of *the prince of historians*, except 4 orations and 2 epistles, collected by the ancient grammarians.

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the profligacy of this writer's morals, and his particular attachments in life, those things seem to have laid no bias upon him as a writer. He does justice both to Cicero and Cæsar in his history of the Catilinarian conspiracy; and he is said to have taken uncommon pains to get well informed in the particulars of his history. With regard to the Punic wars in particular, we are told that he not only examined the memoirs and writings of those countries, but visited many places in person, to avoid mistakes in his descriptions.

Sallust falls far short of the majesty of Livy, but he is remarkably happy in a peculiar conciseness, fulness and energy of expression, for which he is said to have particularly studied Thucydides. His harangues are extremely elaborate, but much too long, in proportion to the history, and they have every appearance of being purposely introduced to show his own eloquence, on a variety of occasions.

A fondness for these set declamations has strangely seized almost all the historians of antiquity who are famous for their style and manner of composition. It may perhaps be, in part, accounted for by considering that they were almost all educated pleaders; and that

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propriety of address on every occasion was so much studied by the Romans, that it was the constant exercise of youth at schools, as we learn from Juvenal, to make speeches for the heroes of history*; and one great and happy example would occasion many imitations of that unnatural manner. It must be acknowledged, however, that they tend to make history much more interesting, by obliging the reader to dwell longer on the state of things in important situations.

Julius Cæsar's Commentaries of his own wars, and the supplements by *Hirtius* and others.

Julius Cæsar was a man who, by the arts of popularity, acquired great ascendancy over the people at Rome. Being entrusted with the command of an army in Gaul, he reduced all that country into subjection to the Romans, and by the same good fortune, and his own excellent conduct, he made himself master of the commonwealth; but fell a sacrifice to the spirit of liberty, which was not yet sufficiently quelled in that brave and high-spirited people.

The title of Cæsar's *Commentaries* does not promise a regular and complete history of the wars of which they treat. But so masterly is the performance, that none of the ancients ever attempted to improve upon them. Though Cæsar is the hero of his own history, he always speaks of himself in the third person; and he gives an account of the prodigious success he met

* Here is probably a reference to *Sat.* x., where Hannibal is apostrophized:

"I, demens, et sævas curre per Alpes,
Ut pueris placeas, et declamatio fias."—

Thus paraphrased by Wakefield:—

"Go, scale yon Alps, tremendous conqueror! go;
Brave the loud blast, and tread th' eternal snow;
Then claim the meed of mad Ambition's dream,
A hackneyed hero of the school-boy's theme."—*Ed.*

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with, with the greatest delicacy, and with as much coolness and impartiality, as if he were writing the history of any other person.

In this, Cæsar exactly resembles Xenophon. Indeed, there are few persons whose circumstances and manner of writing admit of a nearer comparison. They have the same advantage in the clearness of their descriptions of things relating to war, from having been generals themselves. They have the same simplicity and ease in their style, and both are equally sparing in introducing set speeches. Of the two, Cæsar keeps nearer to nature and probability in this respect. Perhaps he might choose to style his work *Commentaries*, rather than lay himself under a kind of necessity of swelling a regular *history*, with ornaments so unsuitable to a work which ought to be the exact copy of truth and real life.

Hirtius, who wrote some of the books which are generally joined with Cæsar, was a man intimately acquainted with the transactions of those times. After the death of Cæsar, he was made consul, and, together with his colleague Pansa, died gloriously at the battle of Mutina, fighting against Antony. His style and manner of composition, as well as the subject of his history, justly entitle him to a place next to Cæsar. The other pieces commonly annexed to Cæsar, are greatly inferior to these.

To obtain a clear idea of the history of this important period of time, *Cicero's Epistles*, especially those to Atticus, ought by no means to be overlooked. Cicero seldom departed from Rome, and was a principal actor in all the great affairs transacted in his time; of which he writes almost an uninterrupted account to his friend Atticus, who lived a retired life, remote from all affairs

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of state. So great is the frankness of this writer, that we see the most secret motions of his heart*, and how he was affected upon every emergence. He also shows us, as far as he himself was able to penetrate, the hearts of all those men who make so great a figure in the history of those times.

Dio Cassius was a native of Bithynia, whither also he retired to pass the conclusion of his life, after having been twice consul at Rome, and been entrusted with the government of several provinces under Alexander Severus, and several of the preceding emperors.

His history comprised all the time from the building of Rome to the reign of Alexander, which he wrote in 80 books, divided into 8 decades, of which few are saved from that catastrophe which has been fatal to many admirable works of this nature, through the ignorance and incursions of barbarous nations. At present, the 35th book is the first of those that remain entire: for we have only some fragments of the 34th. His progress to the 60th is complete enough; but instead of the last 20, we must be content with what *Xiphilinus*, a monk of Constantinople, who wrote 1050 A. C., has given us, in a compendium of them. That which we now have of this author, comprehending the events of 300 years at least, begins at the time when Lucullus had his great commands, and ends with the death of the emperor Claudius. We are as unfortunate with respect to this author as to Livy; since the history of the last 40 years, of the transactions of which he was an eye-witness, is entirely lost.

This writer has by no means avoided the charge of partiality, from his favouring the party of Cæsar and Antony, and his invective against Pompey and Cicero, particularly the latter, whom he treats in the most

* See this strikingly exemplified, *supra*, p. 46. Note *.—*Ed.*

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scurrilous and indecent manner; and perhaps it is not so much an argument of the prudent conduct of Dio, as of a criminal complaisance in him, that he could pass through such dangerous times as those of Commodus, Caracalla, and Heliogabalus, without any risk of his life or fortune. But on the other hand, it is an argument in favour of his character, that he was esteemed by that excellent prince Alexander Severus, with whom he once had the honour of being consul, and under whom he published his history. This writer, however, has certainly fallen into a greater excess of superstition and credulity with respect to prodigies and miracles, than Livy. From Livy's manner of introducing those things it cannot at all be inferred that he believed them. He seems rather to have brought them in to add to the solemnity and dignity of his history; but they make a very different appearance in Dio. The speeches of this writer, which take up whole books, are insufferably tedious; but his style in general is rather admired than otherwise. He was a great imitator of Thucydides, and is not so obscure as *he* was.

The period of which Dio Cassius treats will be made more complete by *Velleius Paterculus*, who lived under Tiberius. He was a person of noble extraction, and had considerable employments in the Roman state. His work is an epitome of the Roman history to his own times, upon which he is more large; and he transmits to us several particulars which we should not otherwise have known. Excepting the gross flatteries of Tiberius and Sejanus, Paterculus's work is a faithful and elegant compendium of Roman history; but it is in several places imperfect. This writer excels in drawing characters; and if his work be thought too rhetorical, it must be acknowledged that his rhetoric is more that of the gentleman than of the scholar.

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Suetonius's Lives of the twelve Cæsars. This author was a Roman born, had been employed in the army and at the bar in the reign of Trajan; and under Adrian he was for some time what we may call secretary of state; but being obliged to quit his office, on account of some disgust which he had given to his master, he retired, and wrote the history he has left us. Indeed, his work can hardly be called a history; since without any regard to chronological order, he has only thrown together such incidents in the lives of the twelve Cæsars, as he imagined would reflect the greatest light on their real characters, and has disposed them in an order which he thought best adapted to that purpose.

Suetonius has given us the most undoubted proofs of his diligence, veracity, and freedom, in the execution of his work. He is even thought to have entered too particularly into the detail of some unnatural vices. His expression is very clear, though concise: but no writer requires a greater knowledge of the manners, customs, and antiquities of Rome to make him intelligible; his mention of them and allusions to them are so frequent.

Tacitus's Annals and History. This author was a Roman, who was advanced regularly through all the honours of the state, till he was made consul under Nerva. He wrote annals of the public affairs in 16 books, which begin at the death of Augustus Cæsar, and continue the story almost to the end of Nero. We have but part of them left; viz. the 4 first books, a small part of the 5th, all the 6th, from the 11th to the 15th, and part of the 16th. The two last years of Nero, and part of the foregoing year, are wanting. These are the last books of the work. He has left us a *history* likewise, which extends from the beginning of the reign of Galba to the end of that of Domitian.

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There are also extant of this author, one book of the *Manners of the Germans*, and another of the *Life of Agricola*.

Tacitus is a most faithful, grave, and severe writer. Indeed, the subject of his history exhibits the most shocking spectacle of vice which the annals of mankind can show; in which case, true history must necessarily have all the keenness of satire. This history contains a fund of political knowledge, and on that account is very proper to be studied by princes and ministers of state.

Nothing can be more opposite than the style of Tacitus and that of Cæsar; yet each may be called excellent in their kind. Tacitus has not the beautiful simplicity and easy flow of Cæsar, but his language has equal precision, and more force. He is not so easy to be understood, but he does not please less when he is understood. It is hardly credible that so much sentiment should be crowded into so small a compass as is done by Tacitus. Cæsar will perhaps have more charms for a young gentleman, but Tacitus will give more satisfaction to a person of age and experience.

Tacitus is the last Roman historian who is worth reading, except barely for the sake of those *facts* which we have no other method of getting acquainted with. Indeed both Suetonius and Tacitus are generally placed in what is called the *silver age* of the Latin tongue; but all the succeeding writers are universally thrown into the *brazen* or *iron* age. I shall therefore content myself with a slighter mention of them, in the order in which they ought to be read, without distinguishing them into primary and secondary writers.

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LECTURE XXIV.

THE lives of Nerva and Trajan written by *Aurelius Victor* or Xiphilin. Aurelius Victor was a person of mean birth, but, on account of his learning and abilities, was advanced by Constantius, the son of Constantine the Great, to several considerable employments in the state. Among other works, he wrote a history of the Cæsars, from Augustus down to Constantius his patron.

Spartian's Adrian, and *Capitolinus's* Antoninus.

Herodian. This author was a Greek grammarian of Alexandria in the second century, but he spent most of his time at Rome in the court of the emperors, where he wrote his history. It consists of 8 books, from the death of Antoninus Philosophus to Balbinus and Pupienus, in the year 238, which is the history of his own times.

Few authors have ever had a happier or more engaging manner of writing than this. He presents every scene with its causes and effects in the clearest and easiest point of view; and his style, without the least appearance of labour, has all the charms of simplicity and elegance.

After Herodian, must be read what has not been already directed to out of the 6 following writers, commonly known by the name of *Scriptores Romani*, or *Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores*, viz. Spartianus, Lampridius, Capitolinus, Vulcatius, Trebellius Pollio, and Vopiscus. They are published altogether by Casaubon and Salmasius. They all flourished about the time of Dioclesian, or Constantine, and their works are not easily distinguished from one another. But there is a chasm in these writers, between Gordian III. and Valentinian,

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which may be supplied from Aurelius Victor. By the help of this supplement, the above-mentioned writers bring down the history to the year of the City 1036, of Christ 283.

If any person would choose to see an epitome of the Roman history till about this time, *Eutropius* will furnish him with a pretty good one in Latin. He was an Italian sophist, and secretary to Constantine the Great, but more particularly trusted by Julian. By the express order of the emperor Valens he wrote a compendium of the Roman history to the death of Jovian, in the year of the City 1119, of Christ 366. All the writers of the Roman history from this time are Greek, except Ammianus Marcellinus.

Zozimus wrote the history of the declension of the empire in 6 books, beginning with Augustus, giving a fuller account of things from the reign of Dioclesian, and ending with the taking of Rome by the Goths under Alaric. In the 1st book, he runs through all the first emperors to Dioclesian, with great brevity; but in the other 5 books, he gives a larger and fuller account. He lived in the time of Theodosius the younger, who began his reign in the year 507. Zozimus was a pagan, and therefore very often reflects upon the Christian princes; notwithstanding which, his fidelity is not easily to be called in question.

Zonaras wrote a general history, from the beginning of the world to the death of the emperor Alexius Comnenus in the year 1119, in whose time he lived. He divided his work into 3 tomes. In the 1st, he gives a brief history of the world from the creation to the destruction of Jerusalem; in the 2nd, he writes the Roman history from the building of Rome to Constantine the Great, but very briefly; and in the 3d tome, he gives an account of the actions of all the Christian em-

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perors, from Constantine the Great to the death of Alexius Comnenus.

This history and that of Zozimus will be made more complete by *Jornandes's* history of the successions of kingdoms and times, and his history of the Goths. He flourished about the year 540. He was himself a Goth, or an Alan, and, as he says, joined the Gothic historians with the Greek and Latin writers, in order to compile his history.

Ammianus Marcellinus flourished in the year 375, and was a soldier under Constantine and Julian. He wrote 31 books from the beginning of Nerva to the death of Valens, in whose court he lived; but of those the first 13 have perished. In those which are extant, he begins with Gallus Cæsar about the year 353, and largely describes the actions and lives of Constantius Cæsar, Julian, Jovian, Valentinian, and Valens. He was an eye-witness of a great part of what he writes, and he brings the history to the year of Rome 1128, of Christ 378.

In the miscellaneous history of *Paulus Diaconus*, beginning with B. xii. will be found a complete history from Valentinian to the deposition of Michael Curopalates, in the year 812, in which time this author lived.

Procopius flourished in the year 402, and wrote 7 books of the Persian, Gothic, and Vandalic wars, undertaken by Justinian, and conducted by his general Belisarius.

Agathias lived about the year 567. He was a lawyer by profession, of Smyrna in Asia; he wrote 5 books of the reign and actions of Justinian, and begins his history where Procopius ended. He was a pagan.

If any person choose to omit these last-mentioned writers, and go on with the 3d tome of Zonaras, he may

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pass on from Zonaras to *Nicetas Acominatus*, or Chonites, who begins where Zonaras ends, and continues the history pretty largely for 85 years, to the taking of Constantinople by Baldwin the Flandrian, in the year 1203. This writer was born at Chonis, a town in Phrygia, from whence he took his name.

After Nicetas, follows *Nicephorus Gregoras*, who wrote a history of 145 years, from Theodorus Lascares the first to the death of Andronicus Paleologus the latter, in the year 1341, about which time he flourished.

But whereas the fidelity of this writer is called in question, particularly his history of Andronicus Paleologus, it may not be amiss to take in here *Johannes Cantacuzenus*, who of an emperor became a monk, and wrote an excellent history, under the title of Christodulus. This royal historian flourished about the year 1350. His history consists of 6 books, of which the 2 first treat of the reign of Andronicus, the remaining 4 of his own reign, and what he did after the death of Andronicus. He was made a monk in the year 1360, when he took the name of Josaaphus.

The conclusion of the history of the Constantinopolitan Empire, with the rise and progress of the Turks, who put an end to it, may be learned from *Laonicus Chalchondiles*. He begins his history with Ottoman the son of Orthogul, who began to reign about the year 1300. His work consists of 10 books, and brings the history to the year 1453, in which Constantinople was taken by Mahomet II.

That you may not be disappointed in your expectations from those historians who wrote after the removal of the seat of the empire from Rome to Constantinople, I must inform you, that, as from that time the grandeur of the empire began to decline, the bounds of it to be contracted, and consequently the connexions

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of the Romans to be less extensive than before. The *Byzantine historians*, as those writers are called, are very much confined to the affairs of the empire and court of Constantinople, which for several centuries before the final dissolution of the empire was very inconsiderable. This part therefore of the preceding course is by no means to be called *general* history, like the earlier part of it, but, on the contrary, it is very much limited and particular.

Of all the modern *compilations* derived from these sources of historical knowledge, none are so useful as those which treat of the manners, customs, and laws of the Greeks and Romans. The most complete body of Greek and Roman antiquities is that which has been collected from the united labours of all the best critics and antiquaries by *Grævius* and *Gronovius*. But this is an immensely voluminous work, which few persons can purchase or peruse. A person may acquire knowledge enough of this kind for the purpose of reading the Greek and Latin historians in *Potter's* excellent and compendious system of Greek antiquities and in *Kennet's* antiquities of Rome; but without an acquaintance with these at least, a person will find himself greatly at a loss in reading the course, or any part of the course, of history recommended above. The most complete body of Roman antiquities is that of Rosinus.

Books which contain collections of coins and inscriptions should by no means be neglected by a person who is desirous of receiving all the light he can get into the transactions of any period of past times. The principal collectors of these kinds of records are Gruter Lipsius, Chishul, Montfaucon, Prideaux, Mazochius, and Fleetwood, for inscriptions; and Spanheim, Ursinus, Patin, Vaillant, Hardouin, and Goltzius, for coins.

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With regard to the Roman history, no person can be a competent judge of many important things relating to it, who is not versed in the *civil law*, which contains the history of the domestic policy of that great people. Let every person, therefore, who proposes to study the Roman history, by all means make himself master of *Justinian's Institutes* at least, which contain an authentic outline of their policy; and this indeed is sufficient for the purpose of reading their history.

It would be endless to enumerate all the modern compilations of ancient history. The most complete body of history ancient and modern is the *Universal*, and it is the more convenient for the study of history, as the references in it to original authors are very large and particular on every paragraph of it; so that it is at least a full index to universal history, and furnishes the reader with the means both of enlarging the story, and correcting any mistakes the authors may have fallen into. The performance is certainly a very unequal one, with respect both to judgement and style, and the chronology of it is various, as might be expected from a work which could not have been completed at all but by a great number of hands. It is to be regretted that the chronological tables adapted to it are drawn up upon the old exploded system. But among a few instances of inaccuracy, there are numberless marks of the greatest labour and impartiality.

Of the compilers of the Roman history in particular, *Hooke* seems far preferable to any other in French or English. He has showed the greatest sagacity in tracing the rise, progress, and conduct of that people, and in penetrating into the characters of their principal heroes.

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LECTURE XXV.

As the history of our own country is both more interesting to us, and, on every account, of the most consequence for us to be thoroughly acquainted with, I shall be more particular in my directions to acquire a thorough knowledge of it than I have been with respect to ancient history. To do this in as complete a manner as the bounds of my design will admit, I shall first deduce a regular series of *historians*, from the earliest account of our nation to what may be called our own times, and then give some account of the *records* which our country affords of a different nature (but which a careful historian ought to avail himself of), and also of the places where it is said such records are to be met with. A great part of what I shall advance upon this last head in particular will be extracted from *Nicolson's English Historical Library**, to which I would refer those persons who are desirous of further information with respect to the subject of this Lecture. I shall however so far depart from his method as to give all I have to say concerning the Britons, Saxons, and all the earlier part of our history, by itself.

Imperfect as what I have collected on this subject may be, it will at least suffice to give you an idea of what care, labour, and sagacity, are necessary to compile a good history of our country, from the vast variety of materials which it affords for that purpose; which will make us more sensible of the obligations we are under to those diligent historians and antiquarians who

* First published in 1696 and 1697: in 2 vols. 8vo. There is an enlarged edition, fol. 1736. The author, who became bishop of Carlisle, died 1727, aged 72. I have marked the quotations from this author, when I could ascertain them, and restored his language, as Dr. Priestley professed to *extract* from him.—*Ed.*

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have taken the pains requisite for that purpose, and increase our contempt for those writers, who, without stirring from their closets, or perusing one ancient original author, assume the name of *historians*, and publish pompous accounts of their works; when they have done nothing more than re-publish, in a new, and perhaps no better form, the information that had been collected by others. Of these second and third hand compilers no nation perhaps furnishes a greater number than our own. If such works be recommended by greater symmetry in the arrangement of their parts, and a better style and manner of composition, it cannot be denied but that the authors of them have their merit; but then it is a merit of a different kind from that of the laborious investigators of historical truth, and ought not to be confounded with it.

I must admonish you, however, that you must not promise yourselves much entertainment from the language and style of the original historians of our nation. The bulk of our ancient histories are only to be considered as repositories of facts. It has only been of late years that history has been written with the least degree of elegance by the natives of this country; and even now we can show but very few masterly compositions of this kind; perhaps none which have united with the merit of writers, that of diligent investigators of historical truth. Indeed, these qualifications in modern times are rarely united, though in ancient times they often were.

"The most ancient British historian now extant is *Gildas**. He was a monk of Bangor about the middle of the sixth century, a sorrowful spectator of the miseries, and almost utter ruin, of his countrymen the Bri-

* A native of Dumbarton, who died about 570, aged 50. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1789. iv. 113.—*Ed.*

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tons, by a people under whose banners they expected protection and peace. His lamentable history *De excidio Britanniæ** is all that is printed of his writings, and perhaps all that is any where extant."

Contemporary with Gildas was *Bede*†, who was a Saxon; and though his history of the English nation‡ is chiefly ecclesiastical, he has intermixed several particulars of the civil state of the Britons and Saxons.

"The next British historian of note is *Nennius* a monk, who flourished in the year 830." He is said to have left behind him several treatises, whereof all that is published is his *Historia Britonum*§.

The next remains of the Britons are "*Hoel Dha's Laws*, which were enacted about the middle of the tenth century‖. Of these there are several copies, both in Welch and Latin, still extant; among which is a very old one, written on parchment, in Jesus College, at Oxford."

"We are not to expect any such assistances for ascertaining the history of these times as after-ages afford us, from charters, letters patent, &c." It is very doubtful whether those times ever produced such materials for history; if they did, they have all perished. Neither can we expect any assistance from the medals

* Printed Lond. 1568. 12mo. See *ibid.*—*Ed.*

† Called *Venerable Bede.* He died about 725, aged 63. For a full and interesting account of his life, and the state of theology and literature in Britain during his time, see *Biog. Brit.* 1780. ii. 115 to 133.—*Ed.*

‡ *Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ Gentis Anglorum Libri quinque*, printed at Heidelberg, 1587. See *ibid.* p. 117. Note F.—*Ed.*

Bede's History was translated into the Anglo-Saxon language by Alfred the Great, and there are two editions of this version.—*R. T.*

§ Published by Dr. Gale. Of this work there is a MS. in the Bodleian, three in the British Museum, and one at Bennet College, Cambridge.—*Ed.*

An edition from a MS. lately discovered in the Vatican, with an English version and notes, was published in 1819 by the Rev. W. Gunn, author of a very learned and interesting work on the Origin of Gothic Architecture. —*R. T.*

‖ Those relating to ecclesiastical affairs were published by Spelman in *Concil. &c.* i. 408.—*Ed.*

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or coins of the ancient Britons. "The money used here in Cæsar's time was nothing more than iron rings and shapeless pieces of brass; nor does it well appear that ever afterwards their kings brought in any of another sort."

"After the Conquest, the first man that attempted the writing of the old *British* history was *Jeffery*, archdeacon of Monmouth. This author lived under king Stephen, about the year 1150. He had a peculiar fancy for stories surmounting all ordinary faith, which inclined him to pitch upon king *Arthur's* feats of chivalry, and *Merlyn's* prophecies, as proper subjects for his pen; but his most famous piece is his *Chronicon, sive Historia Britonum*. In this he has given a perfect genealogy of the kings of *Britain* from the days of *Brutus*," (the supposed son of Æneas,) containing a catalogue "of above seventy monarchs that ruled this island before Julius Cæsar had the good fortune to be acquainted with it. The first stone of this fabric was laid by Nennius," but the superstructure is this author's own. Notwithstanding this author has not been without his advocates, particularly the famous J. Leland *, his history is now universally regarded in no other light than that of a romance.

"Contemporary with this Jeffery was *Caradocus*, a monk of Lancarvan; who contented himself with writing a history of the petty kings of Wales after they were driven into that corner of the island by the Saxons. This history (which was written originally in Latin, and brought as low as the year 1156 by its author,) was afterwards translated into English by Hum-

* *Comment. de Script. Brit.* p. 190. Respecting Gildas, Nennius, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, see Mr. George Ellis's Introduction to his *Specimens of Early English Romances*. The reader may find there a summary of the latter writer.—*R. T.*

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phry Lhuid, and enlarged and published by Dr. Powel," and again by W. Wyn, with a learned preface.

"After king Charles's restoration, Mr. R. Vaughan (a learned gentleman of Merionethshire) published his *British Antiquities revived*, wherein are a great many curious remarks and discoveries. The author, it appears, was well known to archbishop Usher, by whom he was much countenanced and encouraged in these studies."

The Roman writers treat of the affairs of this island, both antecedent to their conquest of it, and during their stay in it, only occasionally. Cæsar may be depended upon for an authentic account of his own expedition, and the manner in which he was received by the natives; but it is certain he could have but little opportunity of being acquainted with the manners and customs of the people, or any thing relating to the internal state of the nation. As the Romans were afterwards better acquainted with the island, we have more reason to depend upon the little that we find of our history in Tacitus, Dio Cassius, Suetonius, Eutropius, and the Scriptores Romani, who may all be supposed to have had the perusal of such memorials as were from time to time sent to the emperors from their lieutenants in this province. A great deal of caution is necessary in reading some of the last-mentioned authors; but their defects are well supplied by the famous Mr. Dodwell, in his *Prælectiones Camdenianæ*, which will be highly serviceable to all persons who engage in these studies*. Tacitus's life of Agricola, has all the appearance of being a faithful account of that general's conduct in this island. He speaks of the natives with great impartiality.

* Richard of Cirencester's *Description of Britain*, of which a translation with a Commentary was published in 1809, may also be consulted with advantage.—*R. T*

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Many defects in the Roman accounts have been supplied by inscriptions and coins, found in several parts of our island; and there are daily new discoveries of both. The Roman commanders "took occasion to magnify their exploits in this other world of Great Britain on the reverses of their coins, from whence several good illustrations of that part of our history may be had." Those preserved in Camden's *Britannia* are very valuable.

We are much more happy with respect to the history of the Saxon times, particularly the end of them, than those preceding. It is remarked by all writers, that there is not in the world a history less obscure* than that of England after the ninth century. Nor can we be at a loss to account for this, when we are informed by Matthew Paris, that there was a custom in England that, in each mitred abbey of the order of St. Benedict, some persons of the fraternity, of ability and care, were appointed to register the most considerable events†; and after the death of every king these different memoirs were laid before a chapter of the order, to be reduced to a body of history, which was preserved in their archives for the instruction of posterity.

We have likewise other remains of the Saxon times, which may be of great use to an historian. In several libraries, and in many register books of our oldest monasteries, we have many charters granted by our Saxon kings, but they are to be admitted with great

* With this Mr. Hume seems to have been too slightly acquainted to appreciate its value. The student is now however furnished with a most copious and valuable collection of the materials of this part of the history of our country in the able and interesting work of Mr. Sharon Turner, entitled *A History of the Anglo-Saxons*, and which is founded on a careful and laborious examination of the most authentic documents.—*R. T.*

† See Professor Ingram's Preface to his valuable edition of the *Saxon Chronicle*, p. xiii. &c.—*R. T.*

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caution. "The records of the church of Canterbury assure us that *Withered*, who reigned about the year 700, was the first who gave out charters in writing, his predecessors thinking their bare word sufficient to secure any of their gifts and benefactions*."

Many of the Saxon laws have been published. "The first attempt towards so good a service to the kingdom was made by L. Nowel, who collected all he could find, and left them to be translated by his friend W. Lambard." Mr. Somner corrected the errors of Lambard, "adding several laws omitted by him, and giving a double translation, in Latin and English, to the whole†." And there have been some still later additions and improvements by other hands ‡. There is not much to be learned from the coins of any of our Saxon kings; their silver ones being generally of the same size, and very slovenly minted §.

The oldest history of the Saxon affairs is the *Saxon Chronicle*, first published by Abraham Wheelock ‖, who translated it, and caused it to be printed at the end of his Saxon *Bede*. The author, or authors, of this work are unknown. Some copies of it end with the year 977, another brings down the history to 1001, another to 1070, and another to 1154.

* *Nicolson*, p. 109.—*Ed.*

† *Ibid.* pp. 111, 112.—*Ed.*

‡ The laws of the Saxon, Danish, and Norman times, were published by Lambard, under the title *Archaionomia*. There is an edition by Wheelock, in folio; and another, much enlarged, by Bishop Gibson.—*R. T.*

§ A series of British and Saxon coins to the Conquest are given in eight plates by Dr. Ingram, in his edition of the *Saxon Chronicle*. But the completest work on this subject is that of the late Mr. Ruding in 4 vols. 4to.—*R. T.*

‖ Cambridge, 1644. An improved edition by Bishop Gibson, printed at Oxford, 1692, exhibits nearly four times the quantity of the former; but is far from being the entire chronicle. A much more complete and very valuable edition has lately been published by Dr. Ingram, from a collation of all the MSS., accompanied with various readings, copious notes, and an English version.—*R. T.*

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"The earliest account we have of the reign of Alfred is that of *Asserius Menevensis*, who lived in his court, and is said to have been promoted by him to the bishoprick of Sherborn. This treatise was first published by Archbishop Parker in the old Saxon character, at the end of his edition of Thomas Walsingham's history*. Asserius wrote his sovereign's life no further than the forty-fifth year of his age, which, according to his computation, fell in the year of our Lord 893;" but the work is continued by other hands to the death of Alfred.

"The next Saxon historian, now extant, is *Ethelwerd*, or *Elward Patricius*, descended (as himself attests) of the blood royal, who lived till the year 1090;" but he continued his chronicle of the Saxon kings no further than Edgar. Indeed, "the whole is a translation of a very false and imperfect copy of the Saxon Chronicle," and in a very bad style†.

"Many things relating to the civil government of these times are dispersed in some particular lives of their saints and kings," particularly those of Offa, Oswin, Ethelwolf, and Edward the Confessor."

Of the later writers of the Saxon affairs, *Verstegan* must be first mentioned. His "*Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities* does especially relate to the language, religion, manners, and government of the ancient English Saxons. A great many mistakes have escaped him, some whereof have been noted by Mr. Sheringham. The rest have been carefully corrected by Mr. Somner, who has left large marginal notes upon the whole.

"Mr. Selden was a person of vast industry, and his attainments in most parts of learning were so extraor-

* An edition, in 8vo, was published at Oxford by F. Wise, 1722.—*R. T.*

† See Ingram's Preface, p. vii.—*R. T.*

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dinary, that every thing that came from him was always highly admired and applauded; though" adds bishop Nicolson, "his *Analecta* do not so clearly account for the religion, government, and revolutions of state among our Saxon ancestors as they are reported to do."

"The best performance," says Nicolson, "that I know of, relating to the prime antiquities of the Saxons, is Mr. *Sheringham's* treatise *De Anglorum Gentis Origine*. Our civil wars sent this author into the Low Countries, where he had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with Dr. Marsham and the Dutch language, both inclining him to such studies as this book shows him to have delighted in. He appears to have been a person of great modesty, as well as industry and learning. His collections out of the Greek, Roman, and chiefly the northern writers, are highly commendable, and for the most part very well put together."

"Our Saxon antiquary ought also to be skilled in the writings of those learned Germans who have made collections of their own laws, or have written such glossaries, or other grammatical discourses, as may bring him acquainted with the many ancient dialects of our ancestors and kinsmen in that part of the world; above all the *Sachsen Spiegel*, or *Speculum Saxonicum*, which is a notable manual of the old laws of the ancient German-Saxons *."

In order to understand the *Danish* period of our history, the Danish antiquities must be searched into,

* The *Thesaurus* of Hickes, and the Glossaries of Wachter, Kilian, Haltaus, Ihre, and Schilter, may in particular be enumerated; and the collection of ancient laws in the *Thesaurus* of the latter. Also the curious works of Wiarda, printed at Berlin in 1805, containing the *Asega Buch*, or laws of the Frisians in their ancient language, both of which closely resemble those of the Anglo-Saxons. A very useful Compendium of Ducange's Glossary, in 6 volumes 8vo, was published at Halle, 1772 to 1784, in which much relating to English antiquities is incorporated.—*R. T.*

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and the Runic character understood; for in this character "the Danes registered their more considerable transactions, upon rocks; or on parts of them, hewn into various shapes and figures. On these they engraved such inscriptions as were proper for their heathen altars, triumphal arches, sepulchral monuments, and the genealogical histories of their ancestors. Their writings of less concern (as letters, almanacs, &c.) were engraven upon wood; and because beech was the most plentiful in Denmark, and most commonly employed in these services, from the word *bog* (which in their language is the name of that sort of wood), they and all other northern nations have the name of *book**.

"Our Danish antiquary should also be acquainted with the best *Icelandic* historians; the most ancient whereof is *Aras Frode*, contemporary with *Sæmund* (surnamed *Frode*, or the Wise), about the year 1114. He first wrote a regular history of *Iceland*, from the first planting of the country, down to his own time: wherein he gives an account also of the affairs of Norway, Denmark, and England, intermixed with those of his own nation. This fell happily into the hands of *Thomas Bartholine*, who, with the assistance of his friend the bishop of Scalholt, took care to have it published, A. D. 1689.

"There is likewise extant a couple of *Norwegian* histories of good authentic credit, which explain a great many particulars relating to the exploits of the Danish kings in Great Britain, which our own historians have either wholly omitted, or very darkly recorded. The former of these was written soon after the year 1130,

* "The poorer sort," adds Nicolson, "used bark; and the horns of rein-deer and elks were often finely polished, and shaped into books of several leaves. Many of their old calendars are likewise upon bones of beasts and fishes." *Hist. Lib.* 1696, p. 135.—*Ed.*

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by one *Theoderic* a monk *. The other was compiled by *Snorro Sturlæsonius*; who confesses that he drew it out of the ballads of the *Scaldi*, which he verily believes to contain nothing but what may be firmly relied on as most unquestionable truth. And *Arngrim Jonas*" (who lived about those times) "so far concurs with him, as to assure us that the songsters of those days were far from flattery, and knew nothing of the more modern poetical license of fable and rhodomantade in recording the story of their princes and patrons. This book was translated into the vulgar *Danish* language by *Peter Undallensis*, and published by Wormius."

Only "two Danish historians," Nicolson says, "are necessarily requisite to be in the English antiquary's library; and those are *Saxo Grammaticus* and his contemporary and fellow-servant *Sueno Agonis*, of both which we have an excellent edition by *Stephanius*. Saxo is commonly reckoned the most ancient, as well as most polite, historian of Denmark, dying provost of the cathedral church at Roschild A. D. 1204. Saxo himself says he compiled a good part of his history out of the Icelandic ballads," and "Sueno declares that his is mostly taken from the tales and traditions of old people;" yet the former is thought by Arngrim Jonas and J. Lyscander not to have made good use of his authorities †.

"The great restorer of the decayed antiquities of Denmark was *Olaus Wormius;* who has also enabled us to make many new discoveries in those of our own nation. His *Literatura Runica* was the first happy

* "Who acknowledges his whole fabric to be built upon tradition; and that the old northern history is no where now to be had, only *ab Islandingorum antiquis carminibus.*"—*Ed.*

† "Lyscander seems to intimate that he had a greater care of the style than matter of his book." *Saxo* appears to have been the historical *Hume* of the 12th century.—*Ed.*

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attempt made towards the right explaining of the old *Cimbrian* monuments; which, till his time, had laid neglected, and unknown to the learned world, not only in those northern kingdoms, but in several parts of Italy, Spain, and other European countries, where the Gothic arms and letters had gained a footing. His *Monumenta Danica* is also of singular use to any man that pretends to write upon any branch of our *English* antiquities; some whereof are particularly illustrated by the worthy author himself. Thomas Bartholine, son to the famous physician of that name, has given us an addition to Wormius's discoveries *."

LECTURE XXVI.

AFTER the Conquest (as Sir William Temple observes), though the history of England was not for a long time written "by any one skilful hand, yet is represented in so clear a light, as leaves very little either obscure or uncertain in the history of our kingdom, or the succession of our kings †;" and for this advantage we are indebted to our monasteries. I shall only give an account of the principal of our historians since that period, and this as briefly as possible, ranking them in the several centuries wherein they wrote.

The first of our English historians after the Conquest

* The works of the Rev. James Johnson, secretary of legation at the court of Denmark, should be mentioned under this head: especially *Antiquitates Celto-Scandicæ*, Copenhagen, 1786, containing a series of extracts connected with British and Irish history, from Snorro, the Landnamaboc, Egil-Scallagrim's saga, Niala-saga, O. Tryggvasonar-saga, Orkneyinga-saga, and various other Icelandic and Scandinavian records. His other publications should also be consulted, viz. *Antiquitates Celto-Normanicæ;* Anecdotes of Olave the Black, Haco's Expedition against Scotland, and the Death-Song of Regner Lodbrock: the last three are in Icelandic and English.—*R. T.*

† Introduction, 1695. p. 317.—*Ed.*

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was *Ingulphus of Croyland*. He wrote the history of his monastery, and in it relates many things concerning the kings of England. He begins in the year of Christ 626, with Penda king of Mercia, and ends at the year 1089, which was the third year of William Rufus. This author was the son of a courtier of Edward, the last king of the Saxon race. He was reckoned an excellent Aristotelian philosopher. He was counsellor to William duke of Normandy, and after the conquest of England was by him made abbot of Croyland. The relation this author bore to King Wil iam manifestly biases him in the account he gives of Harold *.

"About the same time wrote *Marianus Scotus* (a monk of Mentz in Germany), who brought down our *English* history, interwoven with a more general one of Europe, as low as the year 1083." He was reckoned an elegant writer for the times, and his work "met with such an universal and great applause in our monasteries, that there was hardly one in the kingdom that wanted a copy of it, and some had several. The best and most complete manuscript copy is in the public library at Oxford."

"The earliest history in the 12th century was written by *Florentius Bravonius*, a monk o Worcester," who in many places of his work has almost transcribed *Marianus*, but "he has added very many collections out of the Saxon Chronicle and other writers. His book ended, with his life, in the year 1119; but it was continued 50 years farther by another monk of the same monastery."

"*Eadmerus*, a monk of Canterbury, is our next historian, whose *Historia Novorum*, &c., was published by

* "Pelting that prince," adds Nicolson "with a volley of hard names, all in a breath, 'Contemptor præstitæ fidei, ac nequiter oblitus sui sacramenti, throno regio se intrusit.'"—*Ed.*

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Mr. Selden, and contains the history of the two Williams, and Henry I., from the year 1066 to 1122. Nicolson says; "it is a work of great gravity, and unquestionable authority." The intimate acquaintance the author had with archbishop Anselm did not bias him in favour of the clergy. "The character which Selden himself gives of him is that his style equals that of *Malmsbury*, his matter and composure exceed him."

"But *William* (monk and library-keeper) *of Malmsbury* has had the highest commendations imaginable given him by some of our best critics in English history." He wrote *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, in 5 books, with an appendix in 2 more, which he styles *Historiæ Novellæ*. In these we have a judicious collection of whatever he found on record, touching the affairs of *England*, from the first arrival of the *Saxons*, concluding his work with the reign of King Stephen, to whom he shows himself as hearty an enemy as his patron Robert earl of Glocester could possibly be."

"*Simeon Dunelmensis* and *Ealred* Abbot of *Rievaulx* are our next historians of note in this century. The former was monk and precentor of Durham A. D. 1164, and might justly be reckoned one of the most learned men of his age. But his two books *De gestis regum* are not his master-pieces." His history begins at the death of Bede in 732, and ends in the year 1129. "Abbot Ealred gives us a short genealogy of our kings" to Henry II. "but enlarges chiefly on the praises of David king of Scots, founder of a great many abbies for the Cistercians."

"About the same time flourished *Henry archdeacon of Huntingdon*, whose 8 books, concluding with the reign of King Stephen, were published by Sir Henry Savil. After *Bede's* time he has many particulars out

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of the Saxon Chronicle, which had been omitted by our historians before him. He is pleased to take notice of one great truth, that he writes very confusedly."

William of Newburg was so called from a monastery in Yorkshire of that name, whereof he was a member. His history begins at the death of Henry I. and "ends at the year 1197," though he is said to be alive A. D. 1220. He has with great keenness exposed the fables of Jeffrey of Monmouth *, for which he is blamed by Leland.

"The 13th century begins with *Gervase*, a monk of Canterbury, who is reported to have been a most judicious antiquary and methodical historian, and to have made excellent collections of the British and English story from the coming in of the Trojans, down to the year 1200." All that is extant of his works begins with the year 1112, which was the 12th year of Henry I. and ends with the death of Richard I. It is said to be done with great judgement.

"Cotemporary with these two, and," as Nicolson says, "a much greater historian than both of them joined, was *Roger de Hoveden*, who seems to have been chaplain for some time to King Henry II †." He has deduced our history to the year of Christ 1202, the 4th year of John's reign.

"The next historian of note and figure is *Ralph de Diceto*, dean of London; who wrote about the year 1210." He composed 2 treatises, one called *Abbreviationes chronicorum*, and the other *Imagines historiarum*. "The former contains an abstract of our history (but chiefly in church matters) down to the Con-

* "Of whose History he gives this sharp character; that it contains only 'pro expiandis Britonum maculis ridicula figmenta.'"—*Ed.*

† "King Edward I. is said to have caused diligent search to be made in all the libraries in England for Hoveden's History, to adjust the dispute about the homage due from the crown of Scotland."—*Ed.*

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quest. The latter gives the portraictures of some of our kings more at length, ending with the first years of King John's reign. Mr. Selden is much in the praises of this author and his works*."

"Soon after these appeared *Matthew Paris*, a monk of St. Alban's, one of the most renowned historians of this kingdom. His *Historia Major* contains the annals (at large) of 8 of our kings, from the beginning of the reign of William I. to the conclusion of that of Henry III. From the year 1259 (wherein this *M. Paris* died) to the death of Henry III. it was continued by William Rishanger, a monk of the same fraternity. The whole book manifests a great deal of candour and exactness in its author, who furnishes us with so particular a relation of the brave repulses given by many of our princes to the usurping power of the *Roman* see †, that it is a wonder how such an heretical history came to survive thus long. The same author wrote an abstract of the fore-mentioned book, to which he gave the title of *Chronica*, and W. Lambard first christened it *Historia Minor*." It contains "several particulars of note omitted in the larger history. The fairest copy of this book, supposed to be written by the author's own hand, is [1696] in the king's library at St. James's."

"The *Chronicle of Mailross*, though its title may seem to rank it among the records of another kingdom, may justly challenge a place among our *English* historians, since it chiefly insists upon the affairs of this nation. The abbot, or prior, of Dundrainand in Galloway, a nursery under Mailross, is thought to have been the

* "Though all that is here remembered is usually copied out of other writers, who are often transcribed verbatim."—*Ed.*

† "Yet he is as kind to the pope as he is either to the king himself or the abbot of St. Albans; for he indiscriminately lashes, upon occasion, every body that comes in his way."—*Ed.*

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first compiler of this work; but it was afterwards continued by several hands down to the year 1270."

The 14th century begins with *Thomas Wikes*. "His history, which begins at the conquest, ends at the death of Edward I., A. D. 1307. The author was canon regular of Osney near Oxford, and writes as clearly and fully, especially in some passages relating to the Baron-wars, as so compendious a chronicle as his is, would allow him to do." His style is elegant for the times.

"*Nicholas Trivet*, son of sir Thomas Trivet, lord chief justice, was prior of a monastery of dominican friars in London, where he was buried A. D. 1328." His history is "in French, and bears the title of *Les Gestes des Apostoiles**, *Empereurs, è Rois;*" an excellent copy of it is in Merton college at Oxford.

"*Roger Cestrensis*, who was a benedictine monk of *St. Werburg's* in Chester, was Trivet's contemporary, and wrote a large account of the affairs of this nation. This work he entitled *Polycratica Temporum*, and began it with the coming in of the Romans. He continued it at first no further than the year 1314, but added afterwards a supplement of 15 years more." There are many manuscripts of this work in the Harleian library.

"About the same time, as Mr. Selden probably conjectures, lived the author of that chronicle which goes by the name of *John Brompton*, some time abbot of Joreval (or *Jorvaulx*) in the county of York; which begins with the coming in of Augustine the monk, A. D. 528, and ends with the death of Richard I. 1199." This author is particularly valuable for the collection and version which he has given us of the Saxon laws, in Latin, made in the time of Edward III.

* "Or Popes. *Spelman.* Gloss. in voce *Apostolici.*" *Nicolson.—Ed.*

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The chronicle of *Walter Hemmingford*, who flourished in the reign of Edward III. (whose reign he has more largely described), begins in the year 1066, and ends with the year 1308. He was a monk of Glastonbury, a person of great industry, and a very learned man for the times in which he lived.

Ralph Higden, a monk of *St. Werburg's* in Chester, wrote a history which he styles *Polychronicon*, compiled chiefly from the writings of others, particularly from some ancient chronicles which are now wholly lost. He died very old, in the year 1377.

"*John, vicar of Tinmouth*, afterwards monk of St. Alban's, A. D. 1366, was a mighty collector of our English histories, which he has left digested into 3 very large volumes, whereof there are now [1696] fair copies in the libraries at Oxford, Lambeth, &c. They chiefly relate to the doughty feats and miracles of our English saints."

Matthew, a benedictine monk of *Westminster*, was a great collector of former historians, from which he is usually styled *florilegus*. His history ends at the year 1307, which it is not probable he long survived. "The most eminent of his continuators was *Adam Merimuth*, canon regular of St. Paul's, and an eminent civilian. He begins his work at 1302, and his first part reaches only to 1343; but the second continues the story to A. D. 1380, in all likelihood the year of his own death."

Henry de Knighton, one of the canons of Leicester, in this century, wrote a chronicle *of the events of England*, as he styles it. In his first book he gives us some account of the Saxon and Norman affairs, from the time of Edgar, who began his reign in 958, to William the Conqueror; and then he writes more largely to the year 1395, which was the 19th year of Richard III., in whose time he lived.

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"The 15th century was one of the most rude and illiterate ages." Among the few who were eminent for learning in it, was "sir *John Froissart*, some time canon and treasurer of Chimay in the diocese of Leige. His work contains a general history of the affairs of France, Spain, and other parts of Europe, as well as England; though it chiefly insists on those of this nation," and particularly the wars between the English and French from the year 1335 to 1400. "The author was a Frenchman born, but was brought up in the court of king Edward III.; and many years after familiarly conversant in Richard II.'s." His account of things seems to be plain and honest, and perhaps no person gives a better account of the affairs of those two princes. "He wrote in his own native language, which in his time was the court language of England."*

Passing by a set of very ordinary writers, the next historian worthy of our notice is "*Thomas Walsingham*, a benedictine monk of St. Alban's, and very probably *regius professor* of history in that monastery, about the year 1440. His short history begins at the conclusion of Henry III.'s reign, where Matthew Paris ended his, and continues the history to the end of Henry V. "His *Hypodigma Neustriæ*, as he calls it, has a more particular regard to the affairs of Normandy; giving an account, at large, of that dukedom, from the time it first came into the hands of *Rollo* and his Danes, down to the 6th year of Henry V., wherein the reader will find many occurrences not elsewhere to be met with."

* There are some interesting particulars respecting this chronicler collected by Mr. Hayley in a note to his *Essay on History*, B. ii. 194. See his *Poems*, &c. 1785, ii. 160—177. It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader of The Life and Translation of *Froissart*, by the late Mr. Johnes of Hafod.—*Ed.*

An old translation, by Lord Berners, has also been lately reprinted. An uniform edition of the French chroniclers, in 8vo, is now publishing in Paris.—*R. T.*

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"*William Caxton* was a menial servant for thirty years together to Margaret duchess of Burgundy (sister to our king Edward IV.) in Flanders. He returned into England, where finding, as he says, an imperfect history (begun by one of the monks of St. Alban's) he continued it in *English*, giving it only the *Latin* title of *Fructus Temporum*." Though only "a small portion of this work is owing to this author, he usually bears the name of the whole, which begins with the first inhabiting of this island, and ends the last year of Edward IV., A. D. 1483." This author had certainly good "opportunities of being acquainted with the court transactions of his own time; but his fancy seems to have led him into an undertaking above his strength."

John Ross, with the account of whom we shall close this century, was "a man of tolerable parts, and singular industry. He travelled over the greatest part of England, and made large collections out of the libraries where he came, relating to the history and antiquities of this kingdom.* His history of our kings is still extant" in the Cotton Library, removed to the British Museum. It contains "many collections illustrating the antiquities of our universities."

LECTURE XXVII.

THE first writer worthy of our notice in the 16th century is "*Robert Fabian*, an eminent merchant, and some time sheriff of London, where he died A. D. 1512. His *Historiarum Concordantiæ* consists of seven parts, whereof the six first bring down his story from Brutus

* "He at last retired to Guy's Cliff (about a mile from Warwick) on the banks of the Avon, where he spent the remainder of his life, and died A. D. 1491." *Nicolson.—Ed.*

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to William the Conqueror, and are chiefly taken out of Geoffry of Monmouth; and the seventh gives an account of our kings from the Conquest to Henry VII.* He is very particular in the affairs of London, many good things being noted by him, which concern the government of that great city, hardly to be had elsewhere. He mixes all along the French history with the English, but in different chapters. In the beginning of the seventh part he observes Higden's method of making his years commence at Michaelmas."

"*Polydore Virgil* was the most accomplished writer, for elegancy and clearness of style, that this age afforded." He wrote the history of our nation in Latin to Henry VIII. He was much acquainted with English affairs; but being a catholic, he gives a very unfair account of the Reformation, and of the conduct of the protestants. His work however is necessary to supply a chasm of almost seventy years in our history, including particularly the lives of Edward IV. and Edward V., which period is hardly tobe found in Latin in any other author.

"*Edward Hall*, who was some time recorder of London, where he died A. D. 1547, wrote a large account of the wars betwixt the houses of York and Lancaster, which, in a very flattering epistle, he dedicates to Henry VIII. If the reader desires to know what sort of cloaths were worn in each king's reign, and how the fashions altered, this is an historian for his purpose; but in other matters his information is not very valuable."

The Chronicle written by *William Harrison* and *Ralph Hollingshead*, two obscure clergymen†, was well

* "Cardinal Wolsey is said to have procured all the copies of this history that he could meet with, to be burned; because the church's patrimony was thereby too plainly discovered." *Nicolson.—Ed.*

† "These authors are supposed to have been both clergymen; but it

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received, and is still greatly esteemed*. "Hollingshead frequently owns the great assistance he had from Francis Thynne, some time (in the reign of queen Elizabeth) Lancaster herald, and an eminent antiquary. The second edition of this history was continued to the year 1586 by *John Hooker*, alias *Vowel* †."

The first author we meet with in the 17th century is *John Stow*. "He was a member of the merchant taylors' company in London. He travelled on foot through a good part of England in search after the manuscript historians, in the libraries of our cathedral churches, and was very exact and critical in his collections ‡. Having spent above forty years in these studies, he was put upon the correction and publishing of *Reyne Wolf's Chronicle* by Archbishop Whitgift; and he had fairly transcribed his work, and made it ready for the press, when he died, A. D. 1605. Upon his death the revising and continuation of his work was committed to Edward Howes, who says he bestowed thirty years in bringing it into that good order and method in which we now see it."

The Chronicle of *John Speed* "is the largest and best," says Nicolson, "we have hitherto extant. It begins with the first inhabitants of the island, and ends with the union of the kingdoms under king James, to whom it is dedicated."

The Chronicle of sir *Richard Baker*, "who died in the Fleet, A. D. 1644," met with very great success.

is not certainly known where they spent the most of their days,—so remarkably careful have they been to benefit the publick, without the vanity of making their own story known to posterity." *Nicolson*. See also Wood's *Athen. Oxon.* 1691. i. 189, 270.—*Ed.*

* It was reprinted a few years since.—*Ed.*

† See *Hooker* in *Ath. Oxon.* i. 270.—*Ed.*

‡ "Even Sir Francis Bacon and Mr. Camden (not to mention others of a less repute) have boldly taken several things upon his single credit, and, sometimes, without being so just as to own their benefactor." *Nicolson*.—*Ed.*

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The author himself wrote "the history of our kings from the Roman government, down to the end of king James I.'s reign; but it was continued to the restoration by Edward Philips*, who having the perusal of some of the duke of Albemarle's papers might have set that great revolution in its true light, had not ambition and flattery carried him beyond the truth and his copy†."

In latter times we have had no want of historians, at least of compilers of history. The misfortune is that too many of them have been misled by some favourite hypothesis, which they seem to have written to support. To pass by, therefore, such writers as sir Winston Churchill, Sandford, Brady, Tyrrel, Echard, Carte, and Guthrie, which are either said to fall under the former censure, or are too voluminous, or ill digested, to be read with much pleasure or improvement, I shall give a short view of the more considerable that remain.

Clarendon, who accompanied Charles II. in his exile, who was afterwards his chancellor, and last of all discarded by him, wrote a full and pretty faithful history of the civil war in the reign of Charles I. But as he is thought to adhere too much to the royal party, it will be necessary for the reader to compare his account of things with those of Whitlock‡ and Ludlow, who were of the opposite party; of whom the one was a zealous Presbyterian and the other an Independent;

* One of Milton's nephews; of whom there is a recent Life, by Mr. Godwin.—*Ed.*

† "Soon after these additions were published," says Nicolson (the quotations from whom, on English historians, are here concluded), "the whole book was examined by Thomas Blount, who gave the world such a specimen of its many and gross errors as ought to have shaken its credit. And yet (so little regard have we for truth, if a story be but handsomely told) the Chronicle has been reprinted, and sells as well as ever, notwithstanding all the old faults remain uncorrected."—*Ed.*

‡ See "*Clarendon and Whitlock compared*," by Oldmixon. 1727.—*Ed.*

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and who, on account of the rank and employments they bore under the commonwealth, had no less advantage than Clarendon of being well informed of what they wrote. Clarendon is the first Englishman who seems to have attempted to write history with any degree of dignity; and considering how bad a taste for composition prevailed at this time, his success was considerable. But the length of his periods, and his long and frequent parentheses, are very tiresome *.

Few writers have ever had a better opportunity of procuring information than bishop *Burnet*; and the *History* he has left us of *his own Times* is certainly a valuable work †. But being a zealous advocate for the houses of Orange and Hanover, he is charged with great partiality, and perhaps not wholly without reason, by the party whose principles he opposed.

Of all the general histories of our nation till the Revolution none are so full and so impartial as that written by *Rapin*, a Frenchman, who came over with king William from Holland, and after having served under him in Ireland, and travelled as tutor to some of our English nobility, retired again to Holland, where he spent twenty years in the composition of this excellent history. If this writer be thought tedious in some parts of his work, it is owing to his extreme care to omit no circumstance of any important transaction, and to his fidelity in keeping close to his authorities. The notes of Tindal, who translated this work, are an useful supplement to it, and a correction of it in several places. The same author has written a continuation of Rapin to the reign of George II.

* Dr. Towers justly adds, that "in his stories of ghosts and omens, he displays no small portion of superstition and credulity." See *British Biography*, 1769. v. 365.—*Ed.*

† A new edition, "with additions and notes," was published by Dr. Routh in 6 vols. 8vo. Oxford, 1823.—*Ed.*

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A more entertaining history of the same period, and much superior in point of composition, is that of Mr. *Hume*. For a judicious choice of materials, and a happy disposition of them, together with perspicuity of style in recording them, this writer was hardly ever exceeded; especially in the latter part of his work, which is by far the most elaborate. The earlier part of his history is too superficial. He has endeavoured to trace the progress of our constitution, and has descended more into the internal state of the nation, in exhibiting a view of the manners and sentiments of each age, the state of property and personal security, with the improvements in the conveniences of life, than most other writers; but he has represented the ancient government as much more arbitrary than it really was, as will appear by the much more accurate accounts of Dr. Sullivan, and especially Mr. Millar, whose work on the English Constitution I cannot too strongly recommend. Some great faults in Mr. Hume's history were well pointed out by Dr. Towers *. Mr. Hume is also thought by many to have given too favourable an idea of the characters of our princes of the Stewart family, by omitting to mention those particulars in their conduct which have been most objected to; and it was

* In *Observations on Mr. Hume's History of England*, first published 1778. See Towers's *Tracts*, 1796. i. 233; also *Fox* and *Laing*.—An earlier detector of Hume was the Rev. David M'Queen, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, where he published, in 1756, *Letters on Mr. Hume's History of Great Britain*. When Hayley in his *Essay on History* described, 40 years ago, this "idol of historic taste," he even then saw how,

"Already pierced by Freedom's searching rays,
The waxen fabric of his fame decays."

It was, however, reserved for our time to behold one of the historian's able and inquisitive countrymen adventuring with complete success

"From the pretended sage to strip the mask,
When his false *pen*, averse to Freedom's cause,
Profanes the spirit of her ancient laws."

See the Introduction, Ch. ii. in *A History of the British Empire, from the Accession of Charles I. to the Restoration*. By Geo. Brodie, Esq. Advocate. 1822. i. 158. See also *Edin. Rev.* lx. 92. and *Westminster Rev.*—*Ed.*

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probably with a view to exculpate them that he has taken so much pains to give the colour that he has done to the preceding periods of our history. A good antidote to what is unfavourable to liberty in Mr. Hume will be found in the very masterly history of Mrs. Macaulay*. Though the style of Mr. Hume is upon the whole excellent, yet he has departed more than any other writer of the present age from the true English idiom, and leaned more to that of the French †.

Dr. *Robertson's* history of Scotland throws great light upon the reign of queen Elizabeth, and in point of composition is not inferior to Hume ‡.

A valuable treasure of materials for the constitutional history of England is contained in the *Parliamentary History* lately published §, and in the *journals* and debates in the house of Commons, by various hands, among which those taken by Mr. Grey are the most valuable; relating to the times before and after the important period of the Revolution ‖.

It is in such large works as these, and the letters and journals of eminent men, who had a considerable share in the transactions of their times, as those of Melvil ¶,

* Also in Godwin's recent *History of the Commonwealth.—Ed.*

† This I pointed out in the "Notes and Observations" subjoined to my *English Grammar*. To a common friend (Dr. Franklin) he acknowledged the justness of my remarks, and promised to correct his style in future editions of his work; and I believe he has in a great measure done it.

‡ I would particularly recommend to the reader of English history, that written by Dr. Henry, who digests it under certain heads, as *Religion, Commerce, Arts*, &c. in each reign. In consequence of this he has given more attention to each of these subjects than has been done by the generality of English historians. His History comes down to the accession of Edward VI.—*Amer. Edition.*

§ In 1762; comprising the transactions "from the earliest times to the Restoration." 24 vols. 8vo. See also Hargrave's *State Trials*, of which the new edition, 8vo, is chronologically arranged, with indexes.—*Ed.*

‖ These *Debates*, published 1763, in 10 vols. 8vo, extend from 1667, to 1694. The collector was "30 years member for the town of Derby."—*Ed.*

¶ *The Memoirs of Sir James Melvil, of Halhill*, from the original MS. 1683: ed. 2nd, 1735. See also Hutchinson's and Evelyn's Memoirs; and besides the State Papers of Rushworth, and Thurlow; the Paston, Lockhart,

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Henry lord Clarendon, and others, that we are transported as it were into those past times. These give us an insight into the manners and turn of thinking which prevailed in them, and bring us intimately acquainted with the persons who made the greatest figure in them. Hereby we are enabled to enter into their sentiments and views, and have a clear idea of their peculiar character, temper, and manner. In such works as these the men themselves are seen acting and speaking; whereas in general history we are, at best, only told how they spoke and acted, which is a thing very different from the former. Of such books as these there has been no want since the introduction of printing into England, particularly from the reign of Henry VIII.; so that a very satisfactory idea of our history from that time may be had by any person who will take the requisite pains for it.

LECTURE XXVIII.

To the former writers of *general history*, or of the history of their own times, we shall find our account in adding those who have confined themselves to the history of *particular monarchs;* since from these, if not manifestly under some prejudices, we may expect the fullest and most satisfactory accounts. I shall therefore subjoin a brief account of the most valuable writers of this class.

The life of William the Conqueror was written by *William of Poictiers*. "Though a foreigner, and under some seeming obligations to the king's interests," he "has so fairly acquitted himself as to find good credit with most of our historians. There is a short anony-

Culloden, Stuart, and Stafford Papers; and the Letters lately selected by Mr. Ellis from the originals in the British Museum.—*Ed.*

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mous history of this reign published by *Silas Taylor* at the end of his treatise of Gavelkind. The writer lived in the reign of Henry I., and so might be sufficiently informed of the truth of all he relates. But, above all, sir *William Temple* has given us the most excellent and judicious account of this king's reign and policy.*"

"King Stephen's memoirs were collected by *Richard, prior of Hexham*, and make a part of our *Decem Scriptores*†."

The history of Henry II. has of late been very elaborately written by lord Littleton‡.

The expedition of Richard I. into the Holy Land was celebrated by "*Joseph Iscanus* (or of *Exeter*), in a book which he thought fit to call *Antiocheis*. It is in heroic verse, and in a style and strain of poetry much beyond what one would expect to meet with in the writers of that age. This author followed the fortunes of his prince in the holy war§."

The life of Edward II. "was accurately penned in French by sir *Thomas De la More*‖, who was knighted by

* *Nicolson.* See Sir W. Temple's Introd. pp. 120, &c. Also Sir John Hayward's *Lives of the iii. Normans, Kings of England*, 1613.—*Ed.*

† *Nicolson.* "In 1652, a collection of ten writers of English history, posterior to Bede, was published, to which Selden prefixed some account of them, entitled *Judicium de Decem Historiæ Anglicanæ Scriptoribus.*" Dr. Aikin's *Lives of Selden and Usher*, 1812. p. 148.—*Ed.*

‡ In 1764, "We have" says Nicolson, "several pictures drawn of this king, who is represented sometimes as a God, and elsewhere as a Devil, according as the author favoured the court of England or Rome. Thomas May, the translator of Lucan [and the historian of the Long Parliament], has given us (12mo. 1633) seven books in English poetry on this subject: to which is annexed his character in prose, with a short survey of the changes in his reign, and a comparative description of his two sons Henry and Richard."—*Ed.*

§ *Nicolson.* There is *A Short View of the Long Life and Reign of Henry III. King of England*, written by Sir Robert Cotton, and annexed to *Cotoni Posthuma*, 1651. It is unaccountably omitted in the edition 1679.—*Ed.*

‖ Some of his relations seem very questionable.—*R. T.*

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Edward I., was counseller to Edward II., and lived to the beginning of Edward III.'s more prosperous reign. It was first translated into Latin by Walter Baker, canon of Osney, near Oxford, and has been frequently published in English by our general chroniclers. Sir Henry Cary (Lord Falkland) wrote the history of this unfortunate prince, with choice political observations on him and his unhappy favourites Gaveston and Spencer*."

The life of Henry V. "was written at large by one who called himself *Titus Livius;* who by that name dedicated it to Henry VI. We have two good copies of his work, one in sir John Cotton's library, the other in that of Bennet College".†

The life of Edward IV. has been written by Mr. *Habington*, as well as could be expected from one who lived at so great a distance from him‡.

The short and lamentable history of Edward V.§ was "largely and elegantly described by the famous sir *Thomas More*, lord chancellor of England‖, who also began, but did not finish, the history of Richard III.¶

* *Nicolson*,—as a friend has remarked,—employs here "very lenient appellations." See *The History of the Reigns of Edward and Richard II., with Reflections and Characters of their chief Ministers and Favourites; as also a comparison between those princes, with Edward I. and Edward II.* By the honourable sir Robert Howard, 1690.—*Ed.*

† *Nicolson.—Ed.*

‡ *Ibid.* Habington died in 1654.—*Ed.*

§ Who, says Nicolson, "had the name of a king for some few weeks, and purchased the compliment at far too high a rate."—*Ed.*

‖ "Who has sufficiently shown," adds Nicolson, "how a short and doleful tale may be improved into a complete history by a person of good skill and judgement."—*Ed.*

¶ *Nicolson.* The life of this king was written more at large in a *History of Richard III.* by G. Buck, which has been lately republished. That author is described by Nicolson as "a more candid composer of his annals; who endeavours to represent him as a prince of much better shape (both of body and mind), than he had been generally esteemed." The reader will be gratified, if not convinced, by consulting the *Historic Doubts* of Horace Walpole (Lord Orford), in vindication of Richard.—*Ed.*

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The history of Henry VII. has been written in an excellent manner by sir Francis Bacon. He has entered as it were into all his councils, has largely described every thing of importance, and dwelt upon nothing trivial *.

The history of Henry VIII. has been written by *Edward lord Herbert of Cherbury*, with almost as much reputation as lord chancellor Bacon gained by that of Henry VII. This author, however, has dwelt chiefly on affairs of war and policy, and has not entered far into the ecclesiastical history of that reign, which is nevertheless the most important and interesting †.

The most considerable transactions of the reign of Edward VI. are well registered by the young king himself, in the diary written by his own hand, which is still preserved in the Cotton library, from which bishop Burnet transcribed and published it ‡.

The "long and prosperous reign of queen Elizabeth" was written by Mr. *Camden*, "by the special direction and command of the great lord Cecil. It has had many editions, and in several languages; though it is pity," *Nicolson* says, "it should be read in any other than its author's polite original Latin §." The

* See *Nicolson. Biog. Brit.* 1. 488, 491, 499.—*Ed.*

† See *Nicolson.* Also *Annales of England*, containing the reigns of Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Mary, written in Latin by F. Godwin, bishop of Hereford; Englished by his son 1630.—*Ed.*

‡ See *Nicolson.* This Diary is among the Records annexed to Burnet's *History of the Reformation.* There is a later publication of it by the hon. Daines Barington.—*Ed.*

§ Of Camden's style the reader may accept the following specimen. The historian thus describes the policy of his heroine, amidst the perils she encountered during the reign of Mary; for a martyr's crown was not the diadem to which Elizabeth aspired.

"Quum tamen illa, ut navigium ingruente tempestate, sese moderans ad Romanæ religionis normam sacra audiret, et sæpius confiteretur, imo Cardinale Polo asperius interpellante, se Romano-Catholicam præ terrore mortis profiteretur." *Hist.* L. i. p. 21.—*Ed.*

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same reign has likewise been lately written by Mr. *Birch**.

The history of the last century has been very much illustrated by several single lives lately published, particularly those of James I.† Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell, by Dr. Harris‡, in the way of *text and notes*, after the manner of Bayle.§

LECTURE XXIX.

In order to obtain a complete knowledge of the political affairs of this nation, it will be necessary to attend to the *Ecclesiastical History* of it; particularly as before and during the Reformation the affairs of the church and state were so intimately united, that no writer can give a complete idea of either of them separately. Even those writers who confined themselves the most to ecclesiastical matters never fail to introduce a good deal of political history. Thus *Odericus Vitalis*, who wrote thirteen books of church history, in his first and second books treats pretty largely of the mili-

* See also the lately published *Court and Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, by Lucy Aikin, a writer who well sustains the literary reputation of a family, to whom, on various subjects, the public taste and information have been largely indebted.—*Ed.*

† The lady to whom I have just referred has also published the *Court and Reign of King James.*

In 1651, 4to, and in 1692, 8vo, appeared *Truth brought to Light by Time; or the most Remarkable Transactions of the first* 14 *Years of King James's Reign.* This book contains some very curious historical documents respecting Somerset, Overbury, &c.; also the warrants, in 1611, for the burning of Bartholomew Legatt and Edward Wightman, the last victims, in England, of the writ *De hæretico comburendo.*—*Ed.*

‡ Dr. William Harris died 1770, aged 49. His Lives of *Hugh Peters, Cromwell*, and the *Stuarts*, were republished 1814, in 5 vols. 8vo.—*Ed.*

§ As histories of particular reigns and lives are continually multiplying, I leave this lecture a short one, to give room for an account of them.

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tary actions of the Normans, in France, England, and Apulia, to the year 1121, about which time he lived*.

Of ecclesiastical historians there has been no failure since the first introduction of christianity into this island, quite down to the Reformation. Of these some have written general ecclesiastical history, others the particular histories of certain bishoprics and bishops, of particular orders of monks and saints; but for these I refer you to *Nicolson*, who has treated very largely of all the most considerable of them; it not being my business to take notice of church history, any further than it is necessarily connected with civil. In this view, however, I must not fail to mention *Burnet's History of the Reformation*†. For never were the affairs of church and state so intimately connected as during that period. This historian gives us a particular account of all the affairs of the Reformation, from its first beginning in the reign of Henry VIII. till it was finally settled and completed by queen Elizabeth in the year 1559. The collection of records which he gives in the conclusion of each volume supplies good vouchers of the truth of all he advances in the body of his history, and are much more perfect than could reasonably be expected, after the pains taken in queen Mary's time to suppress every thing that carried the marks of the Reformation upon it.

The *Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer* have been published by Strype, who has adhered to Burnet's method, giving his own historical account in three

* See *Nicolson*, P. ii. Ch. iii.—*Ed.*

† In 3 vols. folio; republished a few years since in 6 vols. 8vo. The author abridged the 1st and 2nd volumes. The 3rd volume was abridged by his son. The whole abridgement has been lately reprinted at Oxford.—*Ed.*

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books; the first of which ends at the death of Henry VIII., the second at the death of Edward VI., and the third at that of Cranmer himself. In the conclusion there is a good collection of *records*, among which are several authentic letters and other papers of value then first made public *.

Of all the books not directly historical none are of such immediate use, for the most valuable purposes of history, as LAW BOOKS. In these we may trace both the greater and more minute changes in the internal constitution of the nation, with innumerable other important articles of which general historians take but little notice. I shall therefore give a brief account of all our most ancient law books, nearly in the order in which they were written.

The first book of laws which draws our attention is that which is entitled *Coustumier de Normandy*, and would do much more so, if it were, as some have imagined, an ancient formulary drawn up by the first princes of that country, and brought in hither by the Conqueror. But though it contains many particulars which prove it not to be of so great antiquity, it would still be of considerable value, if it were compiled, as the author himself hints, forty years after the accession of king Richard. There are in it many of the laws of Edward the Confessor, and other Saxon kings, but mixed with Norman customs that are no way related to them. Though a great part of this compilation is very ancient, several paragraphs are translated almost *verbatim* out of *Glanville;* yet some of his courts of justice, original writs, &c. are not so much as named in it.

* A work of more general utility and curiosity is another by the same writer, entitled *Ecclesiastical Memorials relating chiefly to Religion and the Reformation, &c. under King Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Queen Mary,* in 3 vols. folio.—*Amer. Edition.*

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The next author is *Ranulph de Glanville*, who was chief justice in the reign of Henry II. The book that now bears his name (though there have been some disputes about the author of it) was first published by the persuasion and procurement of sir William Stamford, and has since had several editions. Its title is *Tractatus de Legibus et Consuetudinibus Regni Angliæ, &c.* It is divided into 14 books, each of which relates to a distinct division of the law, as it stood in his time; and in all these he gives the forms of such *writs* as were then, and are mostly still in use, upon all the several occasions that are treated of.

John Bracton, the author of a treatise which goes by his name*, was judge-itinerant in the latter end of the reign of Henry III. and the beginning of Edward I. This truly venerable code of our ancient common law consists of 5 books, which begin with the several legal ways of procuring property, and proceed to those of the just maintaining or recovering it. This method is very conformable to that of the emperor Justinian, whose laws are also sometimes quoted as familiarly as if they were part of the known common law of this kingdom. On every head this author intersperses a register of proper writs, and reports of adjudged cases in both benches, as also of such as had been tried before the judges in eyre, assize, &c.

The author of that methodical and learned treatise which bears the name of *Fleta*, wrote in the reign of one of the Edwards, most probably the 2d or 3d. In his 1st book he insists chiefly upon the pleas of the crown; in the 2d he gives a most full and curious ac-

* *Bracton de Legibus*, "to which it is said he himself gave the title of *Brito*. One of the most authentic MSS. of this work was burnt in the fire which happened in the Cotton Library 1731." See *Biog. Brit.* ii. 537 to 539.—*Ed.*

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count of all the affairs of the king's household, with many other particulars that greatly illustrate the history of those times; and in the 4 following he shows the practice of our courts of judicature, the forms of writs, explication of law terms, &c. He sometimes transcribes the very words of Bracton, and sometimes has the same things that we find in one of Bracton's epitomizers, *Gilbert de Thornton*.

The last-mentioned writer modelled his abstract of the common law as he thought would be most useful in explaining acts of parliament. He frequently quits Bracton's method, and makes use of one which looks more confused.

Sir Ralph de Hengham was chief justice of the king's bench and of the common pleas in the reign of Edward I. His *Summæ* have always passed under the titles of *Hengham magna* and *parva*, and have both the same common subject, treating of the ancient and now obsolete forms of pleading in *essoins* and defaults. They were long since translated into English; but that being done in the language of EdwarIId .'s or III.'s time, it was thought most advisable to print them in their original Latin. This was done by Mr. Selden, who published them with *Fortescue*, adding a few notes of his own in English*.

Besides these, there were many more treatises on matters of law, written in the time of Edward I., wherein the practice of the bar began first to flourish; but not being much conducive to the purpose of history, the mention of them is omitted in this place.

Andrew Horn, the author of the *Mirroir de Justice*, lived in the reign of Edward II. His design was to give the judges of his time a view of what they should have been, and what they were. He frequently quotes

* See Dr. Aikin's *Lives of Selden and Usher*, pp. 13, 197, 361.—*Ed.*

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the rolls of the Saxon times, and even their very *year books*, which are now vanished; which shows that we have lost many of our best helps to the knowledge of the history of those ages. He pretends to have perused all the laws of this island ever since the reign of king Arthur. The English edition differs very much from the French, and yet the translator pretends that he kept close to the words and meaning of his author.

That excellent French manual of our laws which bears the name of *Briton*, Nicolson thinks was written by that John Breton whom we find one of the king's justices, together with Ralph and Roger de Hengham, in the 1st year of Edward II. Wingate's edition is justly commended for the care and judgment of the publisher; such various readings being added in the appendix as serve very much to supply the defects of the former impression. The language is the true old French of the 13th century, as appears from the authentic instruments of those days, and differs considerably from that of Littleton in the 15th. The whole book runs in the name and style of the king himself, as a summary of all the laws then in force within the kingdom of England and dominion of Ireland.

It is generally agreed that the art of pleading was brought to its perfection in the reign of Edward III., when the little manual of entries which bears the name of *Novæ Narrationes* was first collected and published. It gives us such forms of courts, declarations, defensors, pleas, &c., as were then in use. To which are added the *Articuli ad Novas Narrationes*, being a commentary or some short rules upon them. But all these are few and defective in comparison with what we have in those books of entries which are the work of later times, the chief whereof are those by *William Rastal, sir Edward Coke*, and *sir Humphry Winch.*

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Sir John Fortescue was chief justice of the king's bench during half the reign of Henry VI. In his book, which is entitled *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, and which is written by way of dialogue between the prince and himself, he proves that all kings are under obligation to be conversant in the laws of their own realms; that our laws are not alterable at the sole will of our monarchs; that our constitution, or common law, is the most reasonable, as well as the most ancient in Europe, and more equitable in many things, in which he instances, than even the civil law, or the laws of neighbouring nations; and that our kings are greater and more potent in the liberties and properties of their own people, than arbitrary tyrants in the vassalage of their slaves. This book was first translated and published, together with its English version, by R. Mulcaster, and was afterwards revised and improved with a few cursory notes, by Mr. Selden*.

Nicholas Statham, one of the barons of the exchequer in the time of Edward IV., was the first who reduced the larger arguments and tedious reports of the *year books* into a short system under proper heads and common places, which he did as low as the reign of Henry VI. His example has been followed by many other persons.

Sir Thomas Littleton was one of the justices of common pleas in the reign of Edward IV. His *Book of Tenures* is studied by every body who pretends to any acquaintance with the municipal law of this kingdom, and has been more frequently printed than any other law book whatever; though many particulars of his

* In 1616. See Dr. Aikin, pp. 13, 360. Sir J. Fortescue also wrote *The difference between an Absolute and Limited Monarchy*, first published 1714. See *Ibid.* p. 361. *Gen. Biog. Dict.* 1784. p. 406—*Ed.*

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common law are altered by acts of parliament, and others are disused and grown obsolete. Sir Edward Coke says that this is the most perfect and absolute work that ever was written in any human science. The first volume of *Coke's Institutes* is only a translation and comment upon this book. Sir Edward's *Complete Copyholder* may also be read as a second commentary on Littleton's *Tenures;* and together with these, it will be highly convenient to peruse *sir Henry Spelman's* treatise on the original growth, propagation, and condition of lands and tenures by knights' service in England.

The dialogue in two parts, which goes by the name of the *Doctor and Student,* was written by one *Christopher St. Germain,* barrister of the Inner Temple, who died in the year 1540. The design of the book was to inquire into the grounds and reasons of the common law of England, and to show how consistent every one of its precepts is with right reason and a good conscience.

Sir Anthony Fitzherbert was one of the justices of the common pleas in the reign of Henry VIII. and was author of the *Natura brevium,* which was carefully reviewed by William Rastal, who added a table and some other proper ornaments to what its excellent author seems to have left unfinished.

There were ten volumes of the *Year Books* printed by subscription in the year 1679. These began with the reign of Edward III., and ended with that of the reign of Henry VIII. To these were afterwards added the cases adjudged in the time of Edward II., collected by serjeant Maynard out of several ancient manuscripts.

Anciently judgments at the common law were recorded, with the reasons and causes of such judg-

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ments; and the custom was continued during the whole reign of Edward I. and a great part of that of Edward II. But this custom ceased in Edward III.'s time, when causes were numerous, and the practice of the law was brought to its full perfection. Hence arose the trouble of those *reporters of cases*, who from the beginning of that reign have supplied the defects of the records, and not only afford us, as these do, the final determination of the judges in each case, but also the intermediate reasonings and debates on which such judgment was founded. The authors of these reports are very numerous, and are daily increasing.

The preceding writers are necessary to be studied by a person who would enter minutely into the state of the kingdom with respect to those things to which they relate; but a person may understand our general historians very well if he be master of *Blackstone's Commentaries*, for the present state of the law, *Sullivan's Lectures*, and *Dalrymple on Feudal Property*, together with some of *Lord Kames's Law Tracts*, for the ancient state of it, and the capital changes it has undergone to the present time. *Jacob's Law Dictionary* is likewise a very useful book to be consulted occasionally, in reading a course of English history; as also *Brady's Glossary*, subjoined to his Introduction to the old English History. But without some knowledge of the English law, it can be but a very lame and imperfect idea that any person can get of the English history.

LECTURE XXX.

From books and writings which have been published, I proceed to give some account of the various kinds of *records* which our country affords, and which a diligent

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historian may greatly avail himself of. Of these records some or other are daily published*, but many are of such a nature that we can never expect there will be any other than single copies of them extant; or at most but a few copies of each. These therefore cannot be consulted without having recourse to the places where they are preserved, of which I shall give the best information I can collect from *Nicolson* and other writers.

To preserve as much distinctness as possible in this account, I shall first give an account of those records which are preserved within the verge of the king's court and palace-royal; secondly, of those which relate to the two houses of parliament; thirdly, those of the courts of Westminster, &c.; and lastly, those of an ecclesiastical nature. Articles of less note will be introduced occasionally, where the mention of them will appear the most natural.

The Society of Antiquaries projected by sir Robert Cotton, Mr. Camden, and others †, took particular care to make it one of the rules and statutes of their community, that all the *proclamations* of our kings and queens should be preserved in their library. These are the more valuable, because general historians, although they take notice of what is commanded or prohibited by royal authority, seldom give us the reasons of such public edicts, which are always expressed in the instrument itself, and are much more valuable than it, as they often contain a good part of the history of the times.

* These sources of historical information have been greatly augmented, of late years, by the inquiries publicly instituted, and the reports of commissions appointed to investigate various subjects of national interest. —*Ed.*

† This Society, formed in 1590, was revived in 1614, after being discontinued twenty years; but "at last the suspicious court of king James, taking umbrage at their meetings, they dissolved themselves." See *Biog. Brit.* iv. 298. note C. The present Societies of Antiquaries was incorporated 1751.—*Ed.*

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Charters and letters-patent, making grants of privileges, offices and pensions, are at this day enrolled in chancery; but as they formerly took their rise at the king's court of residence, they are to be looked for in the *Paper-office*.

To distinguish those that are truly ancient and genuine from such as are counterfeit, it will be requisite to be perfectly well skilled in the several changes that have been made in the kings seals and titles, of which Nicolson gives a particular account. For ancient and modern precedents of charters consult *Shepherd's Treatise of Corporations, Fraternities, and Gilds.*

Occasional proclamations, with all dispatches and instructions for foreign ministers, letters of intelligence, and other public papers which are communicated to the two secretaries of state, are transmitted to the *Paper-office*, wherein they are all disposed by way of library, in a place of good security and convenience within the king's palace at Whitehall. There are likewise the credentials of ambassadors, the letters of foreign princes and states, leagues, treaties, memorials, &c. Of what great use to any historian a free access to this treasure may be, appears from Burnet's History of the Reformation. Besides these assistances, the inquisitive historian will here find a great variety of papers relating to the decrees and transactions of several of our ancient as well as modern palace courts.

The court of chivalry has been long discontinued, but some of its records that relate to the proceedings in the Marshalsea are still in the *Paper-office*. There is however little in them to an historian's purpose. What is most considerable in this rich treasure is the vast collection we here meet with of memorials, instructions, plenipotentiary powers, granted in several reigns and on several occasions to our ambassadors and

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envoys, or papers of the like kind presented by the ministers of foreign princes and states residing in England. That great light in history may be had from these is evident from *Diggs's complete Ambassador*, the history of *sir Thomas Randolf's Embassy* to the emperor of Russia, and many other works.

In the *Receipt-office* in the Exchequer there is a short collection of all leagues, treaties of peace, intercourses and marriages with foreign nations, compiled by the industrious antiquary Agard; but this falls infinitely short of that immense store which sir John Cotton's library will afford of these matters. We have there no less than 43 volumes of treaties between the English, Scotch, and French, in a fair and regular method, besides many more of the like kind in a more loose and dispersed condition.

Nor are the memoirs of our own ambassadors only of great use to an English historian; those of our neighbouring nations are no less so, those especially with which this kingdom has maintained the greatest correspondence in treaties of peace and commerce—as France and Holland; from which countries we are often obliged to fetch our information in some articles, concerning which our own historians afford us no satisfaction. The like may be said of Denmark, Sweden, &c., whenever we find our own affairs interwoven with those of other countries. This want is in part supplied by *Rymer's Fœdera*, an immense work, undertaken by the command, and at the expence of queen Anne. It contains not only finished treaties, but letters of great princes and their chief ministers of state, instructions to ambassadors, and other ministers residing in foreign courts, papal bulls of all kinds, congé d'elires, and of restitution of temporalities, royal mandates to the clergy for commemorative masses, fasts, and thanks-

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givings, &c., sculptures of ancient hands and seals, and many other curious pieces of antiquity.

There is another repository of court records, which is commonly known by the name of the *Green cloth*. In this office are not only preserved the accounts of the king's household expences, but also such orders as have from time to time been given by the lord steward, chamberlain, comptroller, &c., for the more regular behaviour of the inferior servants. There likewise (and not in Chancery) were commonly enrolled all letters and writings concerning such matters of state as were not fit to be made public.

A collection of the *laws* before Magna Charta was made by sir Henry Spelman, and is now among the many choice manuscripts in the Bodleian library.

Acts of parliament often give hints of the manners and customs which prevailed at the time of their being enacted; so that many parts of our history may be recovered from them, especially if compared with the writers either in divinity or morality about the same date. Thus the statute against the multiplication of metals shows the attention which was given to chemical experiments in order to discover the philosopher's stone; and Chaucer's tale of the *Chanones Yeman* confirms the same fact*.

The putting of marginal notes to the statutes at large was first begun by William Rastal, who collected

* "The introduction of the *Chanones Yeman* to tell a tale" says Mr. Tyrwhytt, "at a time when so many of the original characters remain to be called upon, appears a little extraordinary. It should seem that some sudden resentment had determined Chaucer to interrupt the regular course of his work, in order to insert a satire against the alchemists. That their pretended science was much cultivated about this time, and produced its usual evils, may fairly be inferred from the Act which was passed soon after (5 Hen. IV. c. iv.), to make it felonie *to multiplie gold or silver, or to use the art of multiplication.*" See an "Introductory Discourse to the Canterbury Tales," in *Biog. Brit.* iii. 479.—*Ed.*

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all in force from Magna Charta to the fourth year of Philip and Mary. These collections have been carried on by different hands to the present time. But since these collections are in many respects deficient, the diligent historian will be obliged to have recourse to the original records.

Before the use of printing, and till the reign of Henry VII., the statutes were all engrossed on parchment, and proclaimed openly in every county; but this custom has since been discontinued. In these parliamentary rolls are many decisions of difficult points in law, in which we have not only the final resolution and judgment of the court, but also the reasons of it.

An exact abridgment of as many of the parliamentary records as were to be had in the Tower of London, from the reign of Edward II. to that of Richard III., was made by sir Robert Cotton, and published by William Prynne*. There is a fair transcript of those from the 1st of Edward III. to the 43d of queen Elizabeth in the Cotton library, where there are also two volumes of indexes to the Tower records.

The last sort of parliamentary records are the *Journals* of the lords and commons, wherein every vote that passes is carefully registered by the clerks of the several houses. A complete journal of the transactions of both houses, from the 1st of Henry VIII. to the 7th of Edward VI., was drawn up by Robert Boyer, and is now in the Cotton library; but the surest fountain is that of the original records themselves in the Tower and Parliament-office. These journals have lately been printed.

* This laborious lawyer, distinguished by the cruel injustice of Laud and the Star-chamber, published also *Records*, in 3 vols. folio; and *Parliamentary Writs*, in 4 parts, 4to. His Works, in 40 vols., he presented to the Library of Lincolns Inn. See *General Biographical Dict.* 1784. x. 485, 486.—*Ed.*

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Sir William Dugdale has given us a perfect copy of all the summonses of the nobility to all the great councils and parliaments of this realm, from the 49th of Henry III. to the present times, wherein we likewise find the like mandates to the clergy and commons.

The records of the king's courts at Westminster are first deposited in the chapel at the Rolls, and as that grows full and overstocked, they are removed to the Tower; where, in two several apartments, they are methodically arranged according to their various kinds and uses. In Wakefield Tower are the enrolments of leagues and treaties with foreign princes, the original laws as they passed the royal assent, authentic memoirs of the English achievements in France and other nations, forms of homage from the kings of Scotland, the establishment and laws of Ireland, liberties and privileges granted to cities, corporations, and private subjects, tenures and surveys of lands and manures, inspeximuses of charters and deeds, made before and soon after the Norman conquest, boundaries of all the forests in England, &c. In short we have here, according to the petition of the commons in parliament, *the perpetual evidence of every man's right*, without which no story of the nation (to use Dr. Chamberlain's words) can be written or proved. In Julius Cæsar's chapel in the White Tower there is another vast collection of records, out of which the indefatigable William Prynne collected his four large volumes. Any of these may be seen and perused, by those who have occasion to consult them, there being a person appointed to attend for that purpose, eight hours every day in summer, and six in winter.

In the records of the court of King's-bench we are to look for all judgments upon notorious treasons, breaches of the peace, &c., as also for the like upon

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common pleas, by bill for debt, covenant, promise, &c., against the immediate officers of the King's court. The public records of this court, as well as those of the Common Pleas, preceding the first year of Henry VI., are in the chapter-house of the church of Westminster; but those of that year and downwards are kept in the Upper Treasury, adjoining to Westminster-hall; such only excepted as are of daily use, and not above ten years old, which are in the custody of the clerks in the Lower Treasury.

LECTURE XXXI.

THE records of that court of Chancery wherein the process runs *secundum legem et consuetudinem Angliæ* are filed up in the *Petty bag office*. The chief clerk of this court is the master of the rolls. In his keeping are the enrolments of all letters-patent, treaties, and leagues, deeds, and purchases, recognizances, commissions of appeal, oyer and terminer, &c., ever since the beginning of the reign of Henry VII., the rest having been transmitted to the Tower. Most of the Chancery records were destroyed by the rebels under Wat Tyler in the time of Richard II.

There are several repositories of the records belonging to the high court of Chancery, all of which are under the immediate care and inspection of the master of the rolls. First, in the *chapel of the Rolls*, the oldest record is a patent roll of Edward V., those that bear any higher date being long since deposited in the Tower. Those of the following reigns, to the end of queen Elizabeth and somewhat lower, are still kept here in good order. Secondly, the *Petty bag-office* first receives the enrolments of patents with the privy seals and estreats from the *Six-clerks*, but is obliged to transmit

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the former to the chapel, and the latter to the Exchequer; so that nothing ancient is to be looked for here. Thirdly, in the *Examiner's office* are depositions of witnesses, from the beginning of the reign of Edward VI. and some few that are higher. Fourthly, the most noble repository of the ancient records in chancery is in the Tower, under the ultimate inspection of the master of the rolls. The principal treasure under his charge lies in several presses within that part of the palace which bears the name of Wakefield Tower. The contents of these are very large. A general account of them in alphabetical order may be seen in Nicolson.

Another considerable treasure of records within the precincts of the Tower of London, and under the same inspection with the former, is in that part which is called *Cæsar's Chapel*. There is a large collection of proceedings in chancery as high as the times of Henry IV., together with regular bills, answers and depositions, from the first year of queen Elizabeth, privy seals, manucaptions, &c., from the days of Edward I., and several other particulars.

There is one famous monument of antiquity belonging to this court which they call *Registrum de Cancellaria*, or the register of writs, containing the form of writs at the common law. These have often been printed.

In the hands of the two chamberlains of the Lower Exchequer there are many ancient records, leagues, and treaties with foreign princes, standards of money, weights, and measures, &c. There were anciently four several apartments wherein the records of the Exchequer were kept, being all in the custody and under the charge of the chamberlains of that court. A particular account of these with their contents may be seen in Nicolson.

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Of the other repositories of exchequer records the principal is the *Pipe-office*, wherein are kept the *great rolls of the Exchequer*, that is one bundle for every year, from the reign of king Henry II. to the present time. In these are stated the accounts of the royal revenue, whether certain or casual. The most ancient record in this office is that which bears the name of King Stephen.

There are also other offices belonging to this high court not to be overlooked by an historian, which are known by the name of their several *remembrancers*, as first, that of the *Queen's Remembrancer*; secondly, of the *Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer*; thirdly, the *Office of Pleas*; and fourthly, the *Office of Remembrancer of First Fruits and Tenths*. To these are to be added the *Courts* of *Wards*, the records of which now make part of the treasury of the Queen's-bench. There is also an apartment in the Exchequer which bears the name of the *Augmentation-office*. For the contents of these I refer to Nicolson.

Among all the ancient records in the Exchequer, *Doomsday book** is deservedly of the greatest reputation and value. It is a tax book made by the commissioners of William the Conqueror, wherein is an exact survey of all the cities, towns, and villages in England. It does not only account for the several baronies, knights' fees, and plough lands, but gives also the number of families, men, soldiers, husbandmen, servants, and cattle; what rent, how much meadow, pasture, woods, tillage, common, heath, marsh, &c., every one possessed. It is in

* "This booke," says sir John Hayward, "was called *the Roll of Winton*, because it was kept in the citie of *Winchester*. By the *English* it was called, *Doomes day booke*; either by reason of the generalitie thereof, or else corruptly, instead of *Domus Dei booke*; for that it was layed in the church of *Winchester*, in a place called *Domus Dei*." See *The Lives of the iii Normans, Kings of England*, 1613. p. 99.—*Ed.*

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two volumes, whereof the former gives a succinct description of thirty-three counties, and the latter a somewhat larger account of Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk. In the front of each county stands a list of the lords of the soil; that is, the king and a few of his nobles. Sir Henry Spelman has given us a sample of the book, but it is said that the society of antiquaries are about undertaking the publication of the whole*.

There is also in the keeping of the king's remembrancer a miscellany of ancient treaties, which goes by the name of the *Red book of the Exchequer*. It has some things (as the number of hides of land in many of our counties) relating to the times before the Conquest, and the ceremonies used at the coronation of queen Eleanor wife to Henry III. There is likewise an exact collection of the escuages under Henry II., Richard I., and king John.

The *Black book* is supposed to have been compiled by Gervase of Tilbury, nephew to king Henry II. In this we have the history of the first institution of the court of the king's Exchequer; the manner of stating the accounts of those times, and the way of collecting the rents, both in money and purveyances of victuals, &c.

The great roll which bears the name of *Testa Nevilli* was compiled in the reign of Henry III., and contains an account of all the lands held in grand or petty serjeantry within the county of Hereford.

The English historian will also find his account in consulting occasionally the records of assize, sessions of the peace, and other inferior courts in England and in Wales. He ought also to look into the *Navy-*

* Two volumes folio were printed in 1787:—two more appeared in 1816, by command of Geo. III., in pursuance of an address from the Commons.—*Ed.*

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Office, and the abstracts of accounts, lists of the old and new shipping, from the several yards at Deptford, Woolwich, Chatham, &c., all which may be seen in the custody of the secretary of the admiralty.

For a just estimate of the military force in England, there are several repositories of papers and rolls, with which an historian should be acquainted. But above all, the *Office of Ordnance* will afford him the best acquaintance with the provisions of war. All orders and instructions for the government of this office, as likewise all patents, and grants to the many officers, artificers, attendants and labourers, with the quarter books for salaries, ledgers, receipts, and returns of his majesty's stores, &c., are in the custody of the clerk of the ordnance; as those for the giving out of any provisions, or stores, either at the Tower, or any other of the king's magazines, are under the care of the clerk of the delivery.

To understand the history of our trade and commerce, it will be necessary to consult the accounts of exports and imports of all our sea-ports, with the amount of the duties paid for them, which will be found with the officers who have the inspection of the excise and customs, and also in the journals of the House of Commons.

The libraries and museums of many noblemen and private gentlemen are able to afford a good supply of materials to an historian who can procure intelligence of them, and have access to them. And since the opening of the *British Museum* *, many persons are daily contributing to that immense and valuable collection, by sending ancient writings and manuscripts;

* In 1753, when the Cottonian Library was removed thither. See *Biog. Brit.* iv. 301, 305. There is now (1825) erecting a spacious building, to receive the valuable library of Geo. III., presented to the public by his present Majesty, and assigned by Parliament to the British Museum.—*Ed.*

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which are much more useful when they are thus made the property of the public, than they could be while they were in their own private custody.

A great number of conveyances, deeds, and other papers and records, in the hands of private subjects, were destroyed in the civil wars; but the subversion of monasteries destroyed the greatest number of those useful materials for history; since many of the most considerable English families had committed their most valuable writings to the custody of the monks, in whose hands they thought them safer than at home. The small scraps of parchment and of paper, on which they were commonly written, were more liable to be lost than the more bulky instruments of our days.

Many collections of these private records have been published. Particularly we have a very valuable and judicious collection of contracts, grants, and other evidences, gathered chiefly out of the *Augmentation Office* by Mr. Maddox, who has placed them in a methodical order, and ascertained the age of every single instrument, from the Norman conquest to the end of the reign of Henry VIII., under the title of *Formulare Anglicanum*. The general heads of this work are certificates, confirmations, compositions, feoffments, letters of attorney, releases, wills, &c., the greatest part of which are certainly genuine; and notice is given when there seems to be reason for suspecting any of them.

Had pedigrees been carefully preserved in all the great families in England, they would have been of excellent service to an historian; since the most remarkable circumstances in the lives of eminent persons are usually recorded in them. But few of these pedigrees are to be met with.

Old accounts of expences and disbursements in the families of noblemen and persons of quality will be of

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singular use to an historian, who cannot but be sensible of what importance it is to take notice of the prices of food, clothes, and other conveniences of life, the wages of servants, and day-labourers, &c.

It is needless to observe what advantage may accrue to history from the *epistolary correspondence*, and private journals, of eminent statesmen*, as also from the lives of such persons, in which the most important part of the history of their times is necessarily introduced.

The use of the *ledger-books*, and other monastic records, is very apparent. The most eminent of our historians are greatly indebted to them. Hence they are enabled to clear the descents and pedigrees of many noble families, the tenures of estates, the ancient customs of counties, cities, and great towns, the foundations and endowments of churches, &c. For how sparing or defective soever the monks might be in recording the public affairs of state, we are sure they were extremely diligent in noting those of their own monasteries; whence it is, that the histories of those cathedrals which were anciently in their possession are the most entire of any in the kingdom.

The greatest treasure of this kind of ecclesiastical records is contained in the famous *Monasticon Anglicanum*, published in three volumes folio by sir William Dugdale and Mr. Dodsworth†. Great are the advantages which all branches of our history, both ecclesiastical and civil, will derive from this work; and there is hardly a private family of any consideration in the kingdom but will here meet with something of its ge-

* Such as the *Burleigh* papers; also the *Julius Cæsar* papers, the letters to Henry Cromwell while lord-lieutenant of Ireland &c. in the Lansdown collection of MSS. now deposited, with an ample printed catalogue, in the British Museum.—*Ed.*

† In 1655, and 1673. See *Biog. Brit.* v. 482, 486.—*Ed.*

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nealogy and pedigree. They are most scrupulously exact in transcribing the ancient records; so that the bad Latin, barbarous expressions, and other deformities of the monkish style, are to be reckoned beauties in them.

Tanner's *Notitia Monastica** is a valuable addition to the Monasticon. It not only contains a short history of the foundation and chief revolutions of all our religious houses, but presents us with a catalogue of such writers (noting the places where we may find them) as will abundantly furnish us with such further particulars as we may have occasion for.

Our two universities furnish several records worthy to be consulted by our historians. There are no less than twenty-one volumes relating to the antiquities of the university of Oxford, as charters, orders, statutes, decrees, letters, &c., all in manuscript. Of those which have been printed, the *Historiola Oxoniensis* is reckoned the most authentic. It is only a short fragment of a single page in octavo, wherein we are told that the Britons began an university at Grekelade, which the Saxons removed to Oxford. Anthony Wood has published a valuable work under the title of *The History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford*†.

The *Black book* of Cambridge makes as considerable a figure there as any of the old statute books can do at Oxford; and it has also its *historiola*, which is equal both for matter and authority to the other. The whole

* *A short History of Religious Houses in England and Wales.* 1695. Republished 1744, and in 1787. There are large collections of MSS. by Tanner in the Bodleian at Oxford.—*Ed.*

† The Latin work entitled *Historia et Antiquitates Universatis Oxoniensis*, was published by the author in 1674. (See *Lives of Leland &c.* 1772. ii. 262.) The same work, written by the author in English, was published by Mr. Gutch, from the original MS. with additions, in 5 vols. 4to, 1786—1792.—*Ed.*

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volume is a collection of ancient charters and privileges*.

The lives of English writers have been written by John Boston†, John Leland, J. Pitts, A. Wood‡, and John Tanner, all proper to be consulted by an English historian. For the character of these works I refer to *Nicolson*.

The registers of ecclesiastical courts can be but of little use to a writer of civil history, especially since the R ormation. It may not, however, be improper to observe, that registers in churches, of marriages, christenings, and burials, were first appointed to be kept in the year 1538, just upon the dissolution of the monasteries. These have been of some use, and might be of more if care were taken to register other remarkable occurrences relating to the public concerns of the several parishes.

LECTURE XXXII.

HAVING treated so largely of the history of our own nation, I shall refer you to such writers as *Wheare* and *Rawlinson* for the historians of other particular countries. Indeed, considering the time it will necessarily require to get tolerably well acquainted with the history of our own country (which it is certainly of the most importance for us to be acquainted with), it will be quite sufficient for any person, let him have ever so

* On *Cambridge*, See Mr. George Dyer's *History of the University*. 2 vols. 8vo, 1814. Also his *Privileges of the University* &c. 2 vols. 8vo, 1824.—*Ed.*

† A monk of Bury, who died about 1410.—*Ed.*

‡ *Athenæ Oxonienses*, 1691. A second edition, 1721. Republished with additions, by Mr. Bliss, in 4 vols. 4to, 1813—1820.—*Ed.*

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much leisure for historical pursuits, to take the histories of other countries from compilers of the best repute; and even, of these, the most voluminous may very well be dispensed with. Englishmen, in general, for instance, hardly need to desire a better acquaintance with the history of France than the abridgment of *Henault* will supply them with. It were greatly to be wished that the histories of other nations were drawn up in the same compendious manner, and with the same judgment. We should then have, as we may call it, the marrow of history disincumbered of that load of superfluous matter, which makes the reading of history, as it is generally written, extremely tiresome and disgusting. But if a person be possessed of the *Universal History*, he will generally have it in his power to inform himself of as much of the history of any foreign country or people as he can have occasion for or desire.

There are some particular histories, however, which are so excellently written, and the subjects of which are so generally interesting, that though little notice be taken of the affairs of our own country in them, no person of a liberal education ought to be unacquainted with them. The principal of these are, *Thuanus's* history of his own times, a work almost equal to any production of the classical ages. *Guicciardini's* history of Italy, *Davila's* of the civil wars in France, *Bentivoglio's* of those of the Netherlands, and *Giannone's* history of Naples. The first of these was written originally in Latin, and the four last in Italian.

No writer whatever can excel *Vertot* in the happy art of making history entertaining; but it is generally thought that he has sacrificed more than he ought to the graces.

Voltaire's *General History* consists of little more than

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observations on a course of history. In general they are certainly just, and, to a person who is previously acquainted with the histories to which his observations are adapted, nothing can be more entertaining; and to this his lively manner of writing not a little contributes.

But though the title of his work promises a compendious view of universal history, and therefore might seem to be intended for persons who are beginning the study of history, it would be wholly unintelligible without a previous acquaintance with the subject; not to say that it requires a good stock of general knowledge to guard the mind against his prejudices, and the errors into which his writings in general would in many respects betray his readers.

Time is continually producing other historical productions of great excellence, with which, as they gain the attention of gentlemen and scholars, it will become all readers of history to make themselves acquainted. The recommendation of these must be left to the lecturer of the day*.

Besides more general histories, many *single lives* are so well written, and are so peculiarly interesting and instructive, that they force an almost universal attention; as that of Sixtus V. by Leti, that of Gustavus Adolphus by Hart, and many others. *Voyages and Travels* are also works of an historical nature that are universally pleasing; and of those every year never fails to produce several that give the most valuable infor-

* Among others that have appeared during a few past years, may be especially noticed, Hallam's *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages*. 2 vols. 4to, 1818. Sismondi, *Histoire des Republiques Italiennes du Moyen Age*. 16 vols. 8vo. Paris 1809—1818. Sismondi, *Histoire des Francois*. 8vo. 6. vols 1821—23. Ginguené *Histoire Literaire d'Italie*. 8vo. 9 vols. 1811—19.—*Ed.*

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mation, and convey it in the most pleasing manner. The most generally interesting are the voyages of the circumnavigators, as that of lord *Anson* and especially the late ones conducted by captain *Cook**.

It is a particular satisfaction, after reading a distinct and interesting history of any particular period, to find another historian whose account shall begin about the same time that the preceding leaves off. I shall mention two courses of this kind which I have perused with much satisfaction.

Philip De Comines, a serious and excellent historian, has left such an account of Charles the Bold duke of Burgundy, and of Louis XI. of France, together with many particulars of Edward IV. of England, as is in the highest degree interesting and improving. Had I the education of a prince, he should get many parts of this history almost by heart. It ends with the famous expedition of Charles VIII. into Italy; and with this expedition the history of *Guicciardini*, another very exact and copious historian, begins; and where he ends, viz. a little after the year 1530, the still more celebrated, and more general history of *Thuanus* commences, ending near the death of Henry IV. of France; including the civil wars of that country, every thing that is interesting on the theatre of Europe, and even in the more distant parts of the world, for the space of about half a century, comprising events of the greatest magnitude and importance.

If a person cannot read Latin, or French (in which there is a good translation of Thuanus), he may, after Guicciardini, take up the history of Charles V. by *Ro-*

* For both instruction and entertainment I would particularly recommend Park's *Travels in Africa*, and Acerbi's *in Sweden and Lapland*.—*Amer. Edition.*

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bertson, and with much satisfaction read that work, and after it the histories of Philip II. and III. by *Dr. Watson*.

A method of making history particularly interesting and useful, is to make the object of it some particular person of distinguished eminence, whose history has a connexion with almost every thing of importance in the age in which he lived; and in writing his history to omit no transaction of any moment. Such a work is the *Memoirs of Petrarch*, in three volumes quarto*, which I have read several times with singular satisfaction. This work gives a distinct view of the most important affairs of Europe for the space of near seventy years, ending A. D. 1374, and including almost the whole period of the residence of the popes at Avignon. As very little is said in this work of the civil transactions of France or England during the reign of Edward III., the defect may be supplied from *Froissart*, whose manner of writing is very natural and pleasing, resembling that of Philip de Comines; and in a series it may with great propriety be read immediately before that work, though there is an interval of nearly half a century between them, which must be supplied from other histories.

Immediately after the time of Petrarch was the *grand schism*, the history of which is largely written by *L'Enfant*, in his *Histories of the Councils of Pisa and Constance*, which to persons who do not dislike church history will be very interesting; and after this he may read, in the same author, the *History of the Council of Basil*, which will bring him to about the time of Philip de Comines.

* *Mémoires pour la Vie de Petrarch*, of which there is an abridged translation by Mrs. Dobson, 1775, 6th edition 1805.—*Ed.*

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If a person finds himself interested in these histories of *councils* (which indeed comprise almost every transaction of importance, civil as well as ecclesiastical, in the period of which they treat), he will have equal satisfaction and advantage in reading *Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent*, a work of extraordinary merit in its kind, especially in the French translation, with notes by *Courayer*.

It would be highly interesting to find a series of the lives of great men which might, in succession, and without interruption, carry us down the stream of time till we come to the period of our own recollection. As *Mr. Berington* has begun in so early a period as the *life of Abelard*, and has written it in a manner that makes it highly interesting, I cannot help wishing that we had other works of a similar construction to bring us from thence to the age of Petrarch*.

Voyages have less connexion with each other than histories of transactions by land, but those of great consequence have often some relation to each other, and therefore are read with particular satisfaction, in succession, as in the collection of *Harris* and others. The voyages of captain Cook, which will always make a most interesting period in the history of navigation, will close this list with great advantage. There are few voyages the objects of which were so great, and none that were so ably and successfully conducted; and they have every advantage of illustration by means of maps and cuts.

* Since this was written, Mr. Berington has written the *History of Henry II. and his two Sons John and Richard*, including that of *Thomas Becket*, which may follow that of Abelard.—*Amer. Edition.*

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PART V.

OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTS OF ATTENTION TO A READER OF HISTORY.

LECTURE XXXIII.

We are now advanced to the last division of our subject, namely, to point out *the most proper objects of attention*, either to an historian, or to a reader of history; that is, to direct a person to those parts of history which will most tend to form his judgment and direct his conduct; which was one of the *uses* which history was shown to answer in the beginning of this course, and the only one with which we have any concern at present. What objects those are that amuse the imagination, and interest the passions, are considered in another course of lectures, viz. that on *philosophical criticism**.

Since there is an infinite variety in the business of human life, different classes of men require different kinds of information, according to their different stations in life. It were vain, therefore, to prescribe one scope, or view, to every historian. He may, if he pleases, write for one class of men, and therefore, with great propriety and advantage, introduce that kind of information only which is peculiarly adapted to them;

* Dr. Priestley must here refer to his *Lectures on Oratory and Criticism*, first delivered at Warrington in 1762; reprinted (1824) in his Works, vol. xxiii.—*Ed.*

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or, writing for the use of mankind in general, consisting both of the speculative and practical part of them, he may compose a history of such materials as promise to be of the most general use; containing maxims and examples both for the direction of the more active part of mankind, and also the most rational entertainment for the scholar and the gentleman.

With respect to a reader of history, it is obvious to remark, in the first place, as has been mentioned more than once already, that every person will best find his account in studying the history of his own country, or profession, and that both in a speculative and practical view.

If a person be called to bear an active part in the transactions of his country, either by presiding in its councils, directing its force, or performing any thing which will probably enter into its history; as his particular conduct is only *a part*, and *a continuation*, of a series of councils, and a train of exploits, which began before he was born, all the parts of which are strictly connected in an infinite variety of ways, no succeeding part, such as he is acting, can be well conducted without a regard to the preceding. For instance, how ill-qualified would a general be to conduct a future war against France who was unacquainted with the conduct of the last war; when every new expedition and stratagem would necessarily have some kind of reference to, or be guided by, a former expedition or stratagem. But the last war could not be thoroughly understood without some knowledge of those preceding it. In the same manner we may argue the necessity of, at least, a general knowledge of the whole of the English history to every English commander.

But the knowledge of history is still more necessary to a minister of state. For every treaty that is made

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with any nation, and every measure that is taken with respect to it, must necessarily be adapted to the preceding transactions of every kind with that nation.

An intimate acquaintance with the history of our country is no less necessary to every person who is concerned in the enacting or in the administration of our *laws*. The conduct of a divine too, whether of the Establishment, or a Nonconformist, should, in many particulars, be directed by a knowledge of the history of our country, both ecclesiastical and civil; and the like is necessary or useful, in a greater or less degree, to every inhabitant of the country. Besides, what more inviting subject of contemplation can a recluse person make choice of, than to trace the revolutions in church and state which his own country has undergone, to enter into the causes of them, and see the manner of their operation.

If a person read history for real use, and the direction of his conduct in his own profession, *biography* will answer his purpose more effectually than general history. Lives have been published of particular persons of every station and profession, princes, generals, statesmen, divines, philosophers, and even artists of every kind, which are of excellent use to inspire a spirit of emulation in persons of the same station and profession. Those in the *Biographia Britannica** are excellently adapted to this purpose; but the *General Biographical Dictionary*†, though exceedingly useful, will not completely answer this end. The accounts it contains of the persons whose lives are introduced into it are too concise. And we cannot become sufficiently

* First published 1747—1766, in 7 vols. folio. A second edition, of which only 5 volumes were completed, was commenced in 1778, by Dr. Kippis and Dr. Towers.—*Ed.*

† Of which there was a second edition in 1784, in 12 volumes. Mr. Chalmers, in 1812—1817, enlarged the plan into 32 volumes.—*Ed.*

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interested in any character, so as to have our emulation and other generous passions excited by it, unless we have an opportunity of seeing it in a variety of lights, and thereby forming a pretty particular and intimate acquaintance with it.

A short description in a few words (such as is given of great men in many general histories) is not sufficient to give a clear idea of a character. It must be dwelt upon a considerable time before it can affect the imagination, and interest the passions. Indeed this effect cannot be produced by any general and abstract description whatever. Those characters only affect the imagination and interest the passions, which we form to ourselves from the representation of a detail of actions, and a course of conduct of some extent.

It is almost needless to observe (though it be of the utmost importance to attend to it) that in proposing to ourselves the imitation of any person or action, we should take care that the circumstances of the two cases be perfectly alike; otherwise a similar conduct will have very different consequences. Yet the circumstances of human conduct are so various, and changes are so imperceptible in a course of time, that men of the greatest sagacity are often deceived by similar appearances, and betrayed by them into great absurdities in their conduct. Thus pope Paul V., in the year 1606, thought to imitate Gregory VII. in laying the whole state of Venice under an interdict. But time had greatly lessened the terror of papal menaces. The Venetians prohibited the reading of the mandate*.

Secondly, if we read history like philosophers, we must principally attend to the connexion of *cause and effect* in all the great changes of human affairs. We

* See *Mosheim, E. H.*, Cent. xvii. S. ii. Pt. i. Ch. i. 19.— *Ed.*

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ought never to be satisfied with barely knowing an event, but endeavour to trace all the circumstances in the situation of things which contributed either to produce or facilitate, to hasten or to retard it, and clearly see the manner of their operation; by which we shall be better able to form a judgment of the state of political affairs in future time, and take our measures with greater wisdom and a more reasonable prospect of success.

Thus a person who confines himself strictly to natural history contents himself with giving a faithful account of the appearances of nature; but a philosopher employs himself in observing the analogies of those appearances, in order to discover the general laws of nature, and produce future appearances from known preceding circumstances.

In this case also the political philosopher has the same prejudices to guard against that philosophers in general have; particularly the two extremes of simplicity and refinement. Some, not considering the vast variety there is in the springs of human conduct, are never induced to go beyond one obvious reason of a great event. Others again assign so many reasons for the rise and fall of states, that we are so far from wondering that they rose so early, or fell so soon as they did, that we cannot help being surprised that they rose no earlier, higher, or faster, and that they fell no lower, or sooner, than they did. When historians, like Mr. Hume, assign a great number of reasons for every political measure, there is this advantage in it, that though it be highly improbable that all of them should have been actually thought of at the time, yet, of so many, some would probably have been attended to, and have had real weight with the persons concerned; and the reader in this case may choose what causes he

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thinks did most probably contribute to bring about the event. This method is certainly fairer and better than pronouncing dogmatically that this or the other circumstance was the true cause of the event, when it could not have produced it singly, though its operation was necessary; or when it was the last in operation of a train which gave birth to the event, and in respect of which it was no more than a secondary cause, and therefore not so deserving of notice as the primary cause.

I shall endeavour to make myself understood by a few examples of the principal of these cases. Montesquieu is one of the most excellent of all political writers; but his lively manner of expression is very apt to lead his readers into mistakes, if they do not make use of some parts of his works to explain others. Thus it is too peremptory to say, as he does, that the blood of Lucretia put an end to kingly power at Rome *; that the debtor appearing covered with wounds made a change in the form of the republic; that the sight of Virginia put an end to the power of the decemvirs; and that a view of the robe and body of Cæsar enslaved Rome. This is certainly ascribing too much to *spectacles*, without telling us what was the reason why such spectacles, in those particular circumstances, had so much influence. For, as he himself excellently observes, if a particular event, as the loss of a battle, be the ruin of a state, there must have been a more general reason why the loss of a battle would ruin it. The same remark may be applied here.

* He says that "Sextus, the son of Tarquin, by violating the chastity of Lucretia, took such a step as has seldom failed to drive tyrants from the cities over which they presided." Montesquieu presently adds, "It must, however, be confessed, that the death of Lucretia did no more than occasion, accidentally, the revolution which happened." See *Of the Grandeur and Declension of the Romans*. 1752. vol. i. p. 3.—*Ed.*

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Bolingbroke excellently shows, in a familiar and striking instance, that we must endeavour to look farther than the nearest cause in politics. The misery of England, he says, under James II., was owing to his bigotry, that to the exile of the royal family, that to the usurpation of Cromwell, that to the civil war, and that to oppression*.

Writers who, with so positive an air, affect to ascribe the greatest events to single causes are very apt to contradict themselves when, in separate parts of their works, they have occasion to speak of two or more causes which were equally necessary to the event. Thus Montesquieu says in one place, that whatever Charles II. of England meant, certain it is that his conduct established the superiority of France in Europe; in another place, that a numerous nobility without estates has been a great cause of the grandeur and power of France. But in other places he very justly assigns other reasons for the amazing increase of the French power. And though, in the passage quoted above, he seems to ascribe too much to mere *spectacles*, in the revolutions of the Roman state; yet in his treatise on the rise and fall of that empire, he gives a most judicious detail of many causes which concurred to produce those events. Indeed, many circumstances are really necessary to almost every event; and, as was observed in a former part of this course, it is very useful to reflect on what minute incidents the greatest events do often absolutely depend, notwithstanding the acknowledged influence of general causes. I shall just add a few more examples of this kind here to those mentioned in another view before.

Mr. Hume observes that pope Clement VII. would

* *Study of History*, let. ii. 1752. pp. 36, 37.—*Ed.*

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probably have consented to the divorce of Hen. VIII., and consequently that the Reformation would have been prevented from taking place in England, at least at that time and in that manner, if a person who carried a particular letter from Henry to the pope had not been detained by an unforeseen accident beyond the day appointed*. Voltaire somewhere says, that a stone thrown a little harder, in a battle in which Mahomet was stunned with a blow from one, would have given a different turn to the history of all the East; and that a pair of gloves of a particular fashion, which the duchess of Marlborough refused queen Anne, and a glass of water which, by an affected mistake, she let fall in her presence upon lady Masham's gown, changed the face of affairs in Europe. And it is certain, notwithstanding all the solid reasons which are given for the rise of the French, and the declension of the Spanish power after the discovery of America, that had Henry IV., Richlieu, and Louis XIV. been Spaniards, and Philip II. and his successors been French, the history of those two nations, as Mr. Hume says, would have been entirely reversed.

Voltaire, justly ridiculing the manner in which some politicians reason after events, says, that "if Germany in the time succeeding Charles V. had fallen to decay; had the Turks invaded one part of it; and had the other called in foreign masters; politicians would not have failed to declare, that Germany, already torn in pieces by intestine divisions, could not have subsisted any longer; and would have demonstrated from the peculiar form of its government, that the great number of its princes, and a plurality of religions, had necessarily prepared the way for its ruin and inevitable

* See *Hist.* ch. xxx. A. D. 1534.—*Ed.*

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slavery. And, indeed," he adds, "as far as human foresight could reach, the causes of the decline of the Roman empire were not so obvious."

An opinion of the profound policy of particular persons is often the occasion of great mistakes with respect to the causes of important events. How many extravagant things are ascribed to the intelligence and schemes of Cromwell; and how absurd is the opinion, which was common in France, that Richlieu was the only person who caused Gustavus the Great to turn his arms against Germany!

It is very possible that the affairs of empires are in fact conducted with no deeper policy, or greater reach of thought, than mankind in general exert in the management of their own private affairs; only the things themselves are more important, and therefore make a greater figure in the eye of the world. Voltaire well observes, that it is not a superior share of penetration that makes statesmen. All men who have any tolerable degree of understanding can nearly discern what is their interest. A common citizen of Amsterdam or Bern, he says, knows as much on this head as Sejanus, Ximenes, Buckingham, Richlieu, or Mazarine. This is certain, that all the capital events in this world, which have contributed to bring about a better state of things in general, all the situations in human affairs favourable to liberty, virtue, and happiness, were brought about in a manner independent of the policy, the designs, or even the wishes, of all human beings, and must be ascribed wholly to the good providence of God, wisely overruling the passions and powers of men to his own benevolent purposes.

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LECTURE XXXIV.

NOTWITHSTANDING the propriety of assigning political reasons for political measures, there is no doubt but that where they depend upon one person, or a few, personal considerations enter very much into them. Princes, though politicians, are still *men*. In absolute monarchies, and particularly in Eastern countries, almost every great event is ascribed by the most judicious historians to the effects of private passions; and queen Elizabeth, though, no doubt, she had political reasons for the unnatural part she acted towards Mary queen of Scots, is not without reason thought to have been determined to it, in some measure, by her envy of her beauty and accomplishments.

It is a good general rule, that whatever depends upon a few persons may often be ascribed to unknown causes, but that what depends upon a great number is best accounted for by determinate and known causes. Individuals may escape the influence of general passions, but multitudes are actuated by gross and sensible motives. Besides, multitudes are not ashamed of being governed by a regard to the interest of the whole body; whereas such motives may influence the conduct of particular persons, as they will not avow, and which there are no means of discovering.

We find in Polybius, that in his time the declared reasons of the conduct of princes and states were different from the true motives of their conduct. But even this author could have no conception, from any thing he had seen, of the great refinement of modern politics in this respect. To see the spirit of benevolence, tenderness, equity, and honour, that appears in

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all our declarations of war, and the manifestos which are published upon entering an enemy's country, a common reader would think that the princes of Europe were more than men; but then he would be surprised that when all princes entertained those excellent pacific sentiments, they should be obliged to have recourse to sanguinary methods in order to terminate their differences. He would think that when all parties concerned were so happily disposed, they would bear every thing from one another rather than go to war.

This attention to the connexion of *cause and effect* ought by no means to be confined to philosophers. It is the interest of the active statesman closely to study it. For, as Bolingbroke observes, the great benefit we ought to derive from the study of history cannot be reaped, unless we accustom ourselves to compare the conduct of different governments, and to observe the methods they did pursue, and the measures they might have pursued, with the actual consequences that followed the one, and the probable or possible consequences of the other.

Besides, in politics, as in every other branch of study, all just reasoning on the connexion of cause and effect is capable of being reduced to practice. A theory, or a general rule of conduct, can only be derived from the observation of a train of causes and effects in real life; and all acting is at random without regard to some theory. Indeed, it is impossible to act at all without some *view*, and that view directed by some *hypothesis*, to which the event is expected to correspond. Is it not then better to form to ourselves the best hypothesis about human actions that we can collect from reading and observation, than to act abso-

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lutely at random; and is it not better and safer to follow a more perfect theory, than a more imperfect one?

Thirdly, there are certain periods in the history of *power*, of *knowledge*, and of *commerce*, which are more deserving of a close attention than others, and these I shall endeavour to point out to you.

The first thing deserving in an especial manner the notice of a divine is *the connexion of sacred and profane history*, in the succession of the four great monarchies, the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; in order to see the accomplishment of the prophecies of Daniel and John. The whole of this subject is treated very largely and in a judicious manner by Prideaux, in his excellent treatise on this subject. Rollin and Bossuet have also taken particular notice of it.

Passing by ecclesiastical history, unless where it is particularly connected with civil, the next period worthy of our notice is that which contains the history of the *Grecian commonwealths;* every stage of which we have so fine an opportunity of tracing in the admirable Grecian historians who adorned that period; by means of which the history of a people so inconsiderable, with respect to numbers and extent of territory, has attracted the attention of all civilized nations and ages, and will be the subject of discourse and of writing to the end of the world, or so long as a taste for knowledge, and a spirit of liberty and magnanimity shall subsist. Here we have an opportunity of observing with the greatest clearness, and with every variety of circumstance, all the advantages and disadvantages of a popular government, both in their struggles for common liberty with a foreign power, and in their contests for superiority among themselves.

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This period is the more worthy of our notice on account of the great resemblance it bears, though in miniature, to the present state of Europe. The power both of the Grecian and European states was greatly increased in consequence of mutual emulation and domestic wars; but whereas theirs were so obstinate as greatly to weaken one another, and give a foreign power an opportunity to crush them all; Europe has hitherto only been exercised to the use of arms, and the power of the whole has been increased by the wars which the several states of it have maintained with one another. The wars between the Athenians and Lacedemonians, particularly the great Peloponnesian war, which is the subject of Thucydides's history, afford an excellent lesson to the English in their wars with the French, exhibiting in the clearest light all the advantages of a maritime force, and the risk that is run by a popular government (or a government inclining to that form) from aiming at extensive conquests.

LECTURE XXXV.

THE rise and declension of the *Roman Empire* is a vast and worthy object of contemplation. For great power rising from low beginnings, for extent of empire, and the duration of it, this will probably be always the greatest object that universal history can exhibit. Never can we see more clearly demonstrated the advantages which accrue to a people from temperance, valour, discipline, justice, and emulation, in the earlier part of their history; and never on the theatre of this world did luxury, a spirit of faction, violence, and lawless power, reign more uncontrouled than when the empire was fully established.

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No history furnishes so striking an example how incompatible extensive empire is with political liberty, or displays in a more conspicuous light the wisdom of Divine Providence, in appointing that that form of government which has hitherto prevailed in extensive empires should be the happiest for the subjects of them*. As to the latter part of the Roman history, were it not for the remains of the Grecian arts and sciences (which never entirely quitted Constantinople till the final dissolution of the empire), no history can exhibit a more disagreeable spectacle, though it is not an useless one. For never were revolutions attended with acts of the basest treachery, and the most studied cruelty, more frequent; nor did any nation ever sink lower into the most despicable superstition.

A less grand object of contemplation indeed, but a more useful and interesting one to the northern inhabitants of Europe, is the invasion of the Roman empire by the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Franks, and other northern nations, and their settlement in those parts of it in which they laid the foundations of the present European monarchies, with their laws and customs antecedent to their migrations. In them will be found the stamina of the constitutions of the several European governments, and of the several systems of laws now in force. From that period every kingdom held on in a regular but separate progress of internal changes and revolutions, till about the end of the 15th century, when the power of the greater barons (derived from the feudal institutions) was broken in different man-

* It is very possible, however, that when the theory of government shall be better understood (to which the experience of the present times will greatly contribute), countries of the greatest extent may be governed as well in the form of a republic as in that of an absolute monarchy. A judicious system of representation would seem capable of removing all the difficulties that could occur in the case.—*Amer. Edition.*

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ners, and with different consequences, in several of the principal states of Europe.

From this time, domestic tranquillity being in a good measure secured, and power being lodged in fewer hands, the ambition of princes began to awake, and consequently systems of politics began to extend themselves, so that the most distant connexions of kingdoms and nations took place. The balance of power was then more attended to, and nothing which could throw the least weight into the scale, though situated in the remotest part of Europe, or even in still more distant parts of the world, was overlooked.

There was likewise a concurrence of a variety of other circumstances which contributed to render this part of history particularly illustrious, and more distinguishable, as *a period*, than any other in the whole course of history, according to the ideas of Bolingbroke, who defines a period in history to be "the commencement of a new situation, new interests, new maxims, and new manners."

About this time the invention of gunpowder* made an entire but gradual revolution in the whole system of war, which rendered it more complex as a science than it had ever been before; so that former battles had been, comparatively speaking, little more than the fighting of wild beasts, in which force is of more consequence than skill. Commerce became vastly more extensive; the naval power of Europe greatly increased, in consequence of the discovery of a passage round the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese, and of America by the Spaniards, with the planting of European colonies in those new discovered worlds.

* By Swartz of Cologne, 1400. First made in England, 1561. On the discovery and concealment of the invention by Roger Bacon, who died 1292, see *Biog Brit.* i. 430, Note *P.*—*Ed.*

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About this time also happened the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, which was attended with the flight of several men of learning into Italy, who promoted the revival of letters in Europe: an event which contributed greatly to break the prodigious power of the pope, and to hasten the Reformation. Now also manufactures began to be multiplied, the arts of life were brought to a greater degree of perfection, luxury was beyond conception increased; and at this time politeness and humanity are improved to such a degree as distinguishes the present race of Europeans from their ancestors, almost as much as men in general are distinguished from brute beasts. I may add, that in consequence of these improvements, happiness is vastly increased, and this part of the world is now a paradise in comparison with what it was.

Every circumstance which contributed to bring about this remarkable and happy change certainly deserves the attention of a politician, a philosopher, and a man. For the events of this period are of more use than any thing that the whole field of history furnishes, to account for *present appearances*, which is naturally the first thing which excites our curiosity, and engages our speculation. *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*

I shall just mention the principal of those states which have since appeared the most formidable to the liberties of Europe. Spain, which first rose to so dangerous a height, made no figure till the union of the two crowns of Castile and Leon, about the time above mentioned; when the discovery of America, the politics of Ferdinand and Charles V., and the conquest of Portugal, advanced that nation to be by far the most considerable power in Europe; but which the absurd

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politics of Philip II. and the weakness of his successors reduced to its former insignificance.

France had no opportunity of showing itself to the rest of Europe before the reign of Louis XI. Till that time, its princes were wholly employed either in recovering their dismembered country from the English, or in their struggles with their own nobles. Also the superior power and politics of Spain prevented the French from appearing with that prodigious lustre with which they were distinguished in the reign of Louis XIV., for which, however, they were prepared by their expeditions into Italy, by their contests with Germany, and by their own civil wars. Since the reign of Louis XIV. the affairs of France were very sensibly upon the decline*.

The history of the northern crowns likewise deserves little attention till about the same period. Before Frederic I. was elected to the crown of Denmark, and that wonderful revolution which Gustavus I. brought about in Sweden, the history of those crowns is nothing more than a confused rhapsody of events, in which the rest of Europe had little concern.

Russia was hardly so much as known to the rest of Europe† till the important reign of Peter the Great; and Prussia, which is now one of the first powers in Europe, had no being, as we may say, till within the memory of man.

The whole of this period Bolingbroke says may

* Till the late revolution, when the whole power and all the resources of the nation being suddenly called forth, it has proved itself more formidable than ever.—*Amer. Edition.*

† Camden mentions the arrival in England in 1567 of two ambassadors "from that most potent emperour *John Basilides*, emperour of *Russia* and *Moscovia*, with rich furrs of sables, luserns, and others, which at that time, and in former ages, were in great request amongst the *English*, both for their ornament and wholesomeness." *Hist. of Elix.* 1675. p.102.—*Ed.*

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be commodiously divided into three parts, forming three lesser periods in politics; the first from the 15th to the 16th century, the second from thence to the Pyrenean treaty, and the third from thence to his own times. The ambition of Charles V. and the bigotry of Philip II., he says, were the object of the first; the ambition of Ferdinand II. and III. the object of the second; and the opposition to the growing power of France was the object of the third. For by the Pyrenean treaty not only was the superiority of the house of Bourbon over the house of Austria completed and confirmed, but the great design of uniting the Spanish and French monarchies under the former was laid.

During all the period which intervened between Charlemagne (in whose time the European states first began to settle into some tolerable form, after the confusion attending the migrations of the northern nations) and the period above mentioned, namely, about the end of the 15th century, Germany (next to the exorbitant power of the popes in temporal as well as ecclesiatical affairs) would make the greatest figure in the eye of a person unconnected with any particular country in Europe. But indeed Europe itself during all that period would scarce attract the notice of a spectator of the affairs of men, who had no European connexions. For several centuries before and after the reign of Charlemagne, Asia exhibited the most inviting spectacle; namely, from the rise of the Saracens in the 7th century, to the establishment of the Turkish empire by the taking of Constantinople. For rapid and extensive conquests, following close upon one another, nothing in history can be compared to the successive victories of the Saracens under their first caliphs; those of the Tartars under Jenghis Khan and

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Timur Bek, commonly called Tamerlane; and of the Turks till they were checked by the rise of the European powers in the circumstances above mentioned.

LECTURE XXXVI.

THE earlier periods in the *English History* are the conquest of the island by the Romans, our subjection to the Saxons, the dissolution of the heptarchy, the reign of Alfred, and the Norman Conquest, by which the feudal tenures were established, and the whole system of the feudal law completed. Thence our attention is drawn to the gradual declension of that system till the reign of Henry VII., and especially the more effectual blow that was given to the tottering remains of it in that and the following reigns, attended with the extension of our commerce, the increase of our naval force, and the growing power of the Commons, who availed themselves of every alteration in the laws and constitution of the country. Thence we are led to view the ineffectual opposition which our imprudent princes of the family of Stewart made to the power of the people, till it ended in a temporary dissolution of the monarchy, and absolute anarchy and confusion. Monarchy, however, was restored again with Charles II.; in whose reign almost all the remains of the feudal system, except the forms of law, were abolished by act of parliament.

But the most important period in our history is that of the revolution under king William. Then it was that our constitution, after many fluctuations, and frequent struggles for power by the different members of it (several of them attended with vast effusion of blood),

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was finally settled. A revolution so remarkable, and attended with such happy consequences, had perhaps no parallel in the history of the world, till the still more remarkable revolutions that have lately taken place in America and France. This it was, as Mr. Hume says, that cut off all pretensions to power founded on hereditary right; when a prince was chosen who received the crown on express conditions, and found his authority established on the same bottom with the privileges of the people; so that there have been no differences between our kings and parliament since. Indeed all the danger we have reason to apprehend since that period seems to be from the aid which the parliament itself may be induced, by indirect methods, to give the court, to encroach upon the liberties of the people.

The history of Scotland is hardly worth the notice of an Englishman till the reign of queen Elizabeth, the period which is excellently treated by Dr. Robertson.

The remarkable periods in the history of the *arts and sciences* are first that of Greece, which was in its greatest glory about the time of Alexander the Great. His age excelled in architecture, sculpture, poetry, eloquence, and metaphysical philosophy. It also produced many excellent writers, whose works have greatly contributed to civilize and polish all ages and nations, which ever after arrived at any degree of refinement.

When the Grecian orators began to fail, the arts and sciences, conducted by the Grecian masters, took up their residence for a short space of time at Rome, namely, about the end of the commonwealth, and till a little after the reign of Augustus; though architecture and statuary were in their greatest perfection during the reign of Trajan. The Roman arts and

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sciences were the same that had flourished in Greece, to which they retired again after the expiration of the Augustan age; and the remains of this kind of learning at length took up their residence at Constantinople. A few learned men being obliged to fly from this city when it was taken by the Turks, took refuge in Italy, about the middle of the 14th century, where they were received, protected, and encouraged by the house of Medici*, and contributed greatly to revive a taste for the learning and sciences they brought with them in the western parts of Europe.

While the small remains of the arts and sciences were confined within the walls of Constantinople, all the rest of Europe was involved in the most deplorable ignorance and barbarity; except that faint glimmerings of learning were still to be found in the cloisters of the monks, the only safe asylum it had in those ages of violence and confusion.

But while so little attention was given to matters of science in Europe, their former seat, they were cultivated with the greatest assiduity and considerable success where they were least expected, namely, by the successors of the eastern conquerors above mentioned. The Saracens, by their conquest of Egypt and several territories of the Greek empire in Asia, became at length enamoured of their sciences, and translated almost all their valuable writings, particularly the works of Aristotle, into their own language.

The later Greeks had likewise many alchemical writers, from whom the Saracens acquired a taste for that study, and for natural philosophy. From the people of India it is supposed they borrowed the nine

* Who, as well as a few others before their time, distinguished themselves by their application to polite literature, and the pains they took to recover the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans.—*Amer. Edition.*

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digits in arithmetic. However, they applied diligently to the mathematical sciences and astronomy. They composed tables for the purpose of calculation, and the rudiments of algebra were their own invention. They also made considerable proficiency in medicine and anatomy; and their poets and historians were numerous and excellent in their kinds.

These sciences, as has been the fate of science almost universally, were both extended with their conquests, and adopted by their conquerors. The Tartars, a barbarous and untractable people, adopted both their religion and their learning, in which, so long as their empire continued, they distinguished themselves, though not so much as the people whom they had subdued, and who had instructed them.

But what is most memorable in the learning of the Saracens is, that it was brought by them (by the way of Spain) into Christendom, and excited a thirst for knowledge, and particularly a considerable application to medicine, chemistry, and natural philosophy, long before the Greek fugitives from Constantinople promoted a taste for eloquence and the belles-lettres.

The Saracens occasioned the revival of the Aristotelian philosophy in Europe, which no person had the courage to controvert before Gassendi and Descartes, who died about the time that Newton was born. In his time, however, the foundations of the true philosophy were laid by lord Bacon, the work was prosecuted with much assiduity by Boyle, and carried by Newton to a great degree of perfection.

The chief reason why knowledge is prodigiously more diffused among all ranks of men in the present age, as well as carried to a much greater height than it ever was in any former, is to be looked for in the invention of *printing*, which first appeared in Holland

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and Germany about the year 1450, a little before the taking of Constantinople by the Turks. This art multiplies books to a degree of which the ancients could have formed no idea, and at very little expence; whereas, in former ages, learning was necessarily confined to the wealthy. This circumstance accounts for the greater proportion of authors in the higher ranks of life among the ancients than among the moderns; but then it was a much greater chance with them than with us, that a genius for learning might arise who would never have it in his power to come at the necessary materials for improvement in science.

The first dawning of polite taste in composition appeared in Provence, about the time of the Crusades, which expeditions furnished a fine subject for poetry. From Provence it passed into Italy, where it flourished under the protection of the Italian princes and states, more especially the Florentines, an industrious, rich, enterprizing, and free people, a considerable time before the taking of Constantinople, as is evident from the history and writings of Petrarch. Together with the belles-lettres, the Italians excelled in music, painting, and architecture. From them these arts and sciences passed into France. This nation, however, was much behind the English in poetry and the belles-lettres in the age of Shakespeare and Milton, but far outstripped us in the reign of Louis XIV. They were, however, far behind us in the more manly studies of the mathematics and philosophy. Of the present times I say nothing. The generous emulation by which we are actuated can only produce good effects.

It is needless, indeed, to say any thing more of the progress which the arts and sciences have made in the last age, when I propose no more, in this place, than just to point out the greater periods in which par-

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ticular attention hath been paid to them. It may not be improper, however, before I close this subject, just to mention the Chinese; who from the earliest antiquity attained to a mediocrity in almost all the sciences, beyond which, chiefly on account of the peculiarities of their language*, they seem incapable of advancing. Being so remote from us, they contributed nothing to enlighten these parts of the world, and their attachment to their own classical books, customs, and the honour of their own nation, is so great, that it is not probable they will ever receive much advantage from European discoveries.

LECTURE XXXVII.

If we would mark the several periods and countries in which *manufactures* and *commerce* have flourished, we must follow the course of the *arts*, which commerce has always accompanied, and in a great measure that of *power*, which seldom fails to attend it; and the progress of all the three has been from east to west, beginning near the land of Palestine.

The first people who were induced by their situation to apply to arts and commerce were those who inhabited the coasts of the Red Sea and the Arabic Gulf, so convenient for transporting goods from the Indies; though it is most probable that goods were first carried by land on camels. These people were the Ara-

* "The arbitrary characters of the Chinese are 80,000, 20,000 of which are reported to be sufficient for common use. It is said that many of the learned understand only 40,000, and that the most learned are seldom acquainted with more than 60,000." Dr. Kippis's Note to "Lectures on the Theory of Language," in Priestley's *Works*, vol. xxiii. pp. 138, 139.—*Ed.*

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bians or Ishmaelites, and especially the Edomites. Their trade was chiefly with Egypt, which by that means grew rich and populous.

Upon the conquest of Idumea by David, the scattered remains of that industrious people fled to the coasts of the Mediterranean sea, where, as sir Isaac Newton conjectures, they took Sidon, the inhabitants of which built Tyre; which being found more commodiously situated for traffic, presently became more famous than its mother country. The Tyrians finding an immense vent for their commodities along all the coasts of the Mediterranean sea, among people who had just begun to be civilized (and whom their intercourse with them, more than any other circumstance, contributed to civilize), grew rich, populous, and powerful to an incredible degree; and notwithstanding they were subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, they were only driven from the continent: for they built a city equal, or superior, to the former, on an island opposite to it, where they continued their commerce with the same advantages, till they were finally subdued by Alexander the Great.

Before this fatal event, the Tyrians had founded many colonies on the coasts of Europe and Africa, particularly Carthage, which by the intimate connexion it always kept up with its mother country, and the free access the Carthaginians had to the remoter parts of Europe, grew to a far greater height of opulence and power than commerce had ever advanced any nation before it.

The taking of Tyre removed the seat of the same commerce to Alexandria, where the Ptolemies were great encouragers of commerce, and found their advantage in it: for the produce of the customs of Alexandria is said to have been two millions of our

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money annually. Alexandria maintained the same rank in point of trade and commerce during the earlier period of the Roman empire, but yielded to Constantinople on the removal of the seat of government to that place. At Constantinople the riches acquired by commerce long preserved the remains of that power which had a very different origin.

During the ravages committed by the northern barbarians in their invasion of the Roman empire, two rival states, Venice and Genoa, rose from the most inconsiderable beginnings, and by their commerce with Constantinople and Alexandria on the one hand, and the western states of Europe on the other, arrived at immense riches and power; so as to be a match for the Turks when they had put an end to the Constantinopolitan empire.

Within this period, viz. in the 13th century, the business of exchange and banking was begun by the Lombards and Jews; an invention of infinite advantage to the trading part of the world, which was now become very extensive. For before this time, commerce had made considerable progress westwards, and many towns in Germany, England, the Low Countries, and France, called the Hanse towns, entered into a league for carrying on a very extensive commerce, which they did with vast advantage, till their haughtiness and warlike enterprises gave umbrage to the powers of Europe, and engaged them to put an end to their confederacy.

Venice and Genoa were ruined in part by their mutual jealousy and wars; but what diverted almost the whole course of trade out of its former channel, and makes the most remarkable revolution in the whole history of commerce, was the discovery of a passage to

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the East Indies round the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese, and of America by the Spaniards. These discoveries they were enabled to make by means of the *compass*, which then first began to be applied to navigation; though that property of the loadstone, on which the use of it depends, had been known a considerable time before.

For about a century and a half these were the only considerable naval powers in the world; but the arrogance and ambition of the Spaniards after the conquest of Portugal, excited the hatred and industry of the Dutch and English. The former first became a free, then a commercial, and then, in a remarkably short space of time, a rich and potent state, much superior to their former masters. The English in the reign of Elizabeth began to follow their footsteps; and by a steady perseverance, and the help of many natural advantages, they have been continually increasing their commerce and naval force, till it is at this day far superior to that of the Dutch, or that of any other state in the world.

The success of the Dutch and English has excited all the states of Europe, in proportion to their abilities and opportunities, to engage in commerce. This emulation has raised such a spirit of industry, promoted so many new manufactures, occasioned the establishment of so many new colonies in all parts of the known world, and brought such an amazing accession of riches and power to the states of Europe in general, as must have appeared incredible but a few centuries ago. And little did the ancient Greeks and Romans imagine that the *divisi toto orbe Britanni*, and the poor barbarous and ignorant neighbouring nations, would ever make the figure they now do, and

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go so infinitely beyond whatever they had attained to in respect to science, commerce, riches, power, and I may add, happiness.

As to the commerce of England, though it was by no means inconsiderable in several periods of the more early part of our history, that were particularly favourable to it, and though it was encouraged by several of our wiser princes in those times, yet, till the period in which I have introduced the mention of it, it never was so considerable as to deserve being taken notice of in this very general view of the progress and revolutions of commerce.

LECTURE XXXVIII.

LASTLY, every thing is worthy of the attention both of a philosophical and a political reader of history which can contribute to make a people happy at home, formidable abroad, or increase their numbers; because a *numerous*, a *secure*, and a *happy*, society is the object of all human policy.

This view opens a new field of the most important objects of attention to a reader of history, which it cannot be expected that I should consider very minutely. I think, however, that I shall not fulfil my engagement to point out the proper *objects of attention* to a reader of history (which implies that I should demonstrate the things I point out to *be* proper objects of attention), unless I explain the great leading *principles of wise policy*, in an account of those circumstances which contribute to the flourishing state of societies, and the mutual connexions and influences of those circumstances. Indeed, the bare mention of them will in some measure answer my purpose, as it will make the reader attend to the things

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I point out, as of principal consequence to promote the happiness of society, and observe their effects in the course of his reading, which certainly leads to the best practical use that can be made of this study.

Of all the things which contribute to the domestic happiness and security of states, GOVERNMENT, with the various forms of it, is the first that offers itself to our notice, and this is in fact the most striking object in every history. To this, therefore, and to every circumstance relating to it, a reader of history ought particularly to attend.

Man is social beyond any other animal, and the connexions which men are disposed to form with one another are infinitely more various and extensive; because they are capable of doing much more for one another than any other animals are. The principle which leads men to form themselves into those larger societies which we call *states*, is the desire of securing the undisturbed enjoyment of their possessions. Without this, the weak would always be at the mercy of the strong, and the ignorant of the crafty. But by means of government the strength and wisdom of the whole community may be applied to redress private wrongs, as well as to repel a foreign invader.

It cannot, indeed, be said that the proper use of society (or that which we may suppose a number of persons, at first unconnected together, and of course at the mercy of their neighbours, would first think of, in forming a society) is any thing more than mere *security*. But as they would soon find, when thus united, that it was in their power to derive much *positive advantage* from their union, *this* may also be considered as a just end of society. The danger, and it is a very great one, is, lest by aiming at too much positive advantage, great numbers may be deprived even of that

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negative advantage which they first proposed to themselves, viz. security from injury and oppression, so that they shall be more incommoded than benefited by the connexion. It may even happen that a great majority of the community, and ultimately the whole of it, may make such regulations as, instead of being useful, may eventually be the cause of much evil to them. For societies of men, as well as individuals, not being omniscient, may not consult the best for themselves, but miss of the very advantage they aim at, and by the very means by which they think to gain it.

It would be well if the power of government was confined not only to those things in which the whole society are interested, but to those in which the power of the whole can be brought to act to the most advantage, as in defence from external injuries, which necessarily requires union; administering justice, which requires impartiality, and in which the parties themselves are not to be trusted; as also in erecting some public works, and forming public institutions, useful to the whole and to posterity.

Since all men naturally wish to be at liberty to serve themselves in things in which others are not concerned, and the good of the whole is the great rule by which every thing relating to society ought to be regulated, it is evidently desirable that recourse should not be had to the power of the society, except where it can be applied with advantage; and since experience is our best guide in things of so complex a nature as the interests of large bodies of men, it is most adviseable to leave every man at perfect liberty to serve himself, till some actual inconvenience be found to result from it.

As there are cases in which *numbers* can easily, and conveniently, assist *individuals*, so there are others in which particular individuals are best qualified to assist numbers. In the former cases there is, therefore,

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a propriety in the interference of government, but certainly not in the latter; and in this class we must rank every thing that relates to the investigation of truth, and the progress of knowledge, as medicine, philosophy, theology, &c., and every thing in practice depending upon them, in which any number of the society may voluntarily join without disturbing others. The reason is, that in every thing of this nature, ingenious and speculative individuals will always be the first to make discoveries, and it will require time to communicate them to the rest. Consequently, if the present opinions and practices of the majority of any society were imposed upon all the rest, no improvements could ever take place; and the most ingenious members of the community,—those who would be the best qualified to serve it, by adding to the general stock of knowledge,—would always be subject to be distressed, and to have their generous endeavours thwarted, by the interference of the more bigoted part of the community, whose prejudices, against what would ultimately be for their own advantage, might in time be overcome, provided that perfect liberty was given to all persons to speculate, and to act as they should judge proper. Different schemes would then be proposed by different persons. The society would have the benefit of all the experiments they would make; and that scheme would at length be generally and universally adopted, which should appear to be most conducive to the good of the whole.

Indeed, one of the most valuable rights of men, as individuals, and the most important to the state itself, is that of giving their opinions, and endeavouring to inform others, where either their own interest, or that of the public, is concerned. It is the only method of collecting and increasing the wisdom of the nation. It is therefore for the interest of the whole that, in a state

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of society, every man retain his natural powers of speaking, writing, and publishing his sentiments on all subjects, especially in proposing new forms of government, and censuring those who abuse any public trust. It is the easiest and best method of checking abuses. Persons may certainly do mischief by this, as well as by every other power of doing good; but it will be sufficiently checked, if every man be punished for any injury that he can be proved to have done by it to others in his property, good name, &c. But if this restriction extend to his public character and the emoluments of public offices, the great use of liberty of speech and of writing will be prevented. If any person be traduced as a public officer, let him vindicate himself in the same way in which he was injured, or employ his friends to do it. He has the same access to the public opinion that other persons have, and he ought to be content with it.

Of those services in which it is useful for numbers to give their aid to individuals, it is not necessary that all of them should be performed by the whole society, some of those services being more conveniently performed by a particular part of it. Thus a public road, or bridge, may be most conveniently made by the district in which it is wanted; but the power of the state may be necessary to compel the inhabitants of that district to do it, or to direct the mode in which it should be done; whether, for example, by a general contribution, or by tolls upon the use of the road or bridge. Where the latter can be done, it is the most reasonable, because every person pays in proportion to the benefit he receives.

Public instruction is an object in which the whole society is interested. It may therefore be proper that the government give some attention to it. But as in-

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dividuals are still more interested in it, it may be best for the state to do no more than appoint schools in every district, or direct in what manner the teachers may be induced, by sufficient salaries, or the use of proper rooms, &c., to instruct all that offer themselves; leaving them to derive the chief part of their maintenance from their fees for teaching. As the arts of reading and writing are of particular importance to all persons, it should seem that effectual provision ought to be made, either by rewards or punishments, that all should be instructed in them.

In a very improved state of society, the occupation of each person is so limited, that in order to attain perfection in it, he must in a manner sacrifice every thing else. Consequently, men would be little more than machines without some knowledge of letters, and an opportunity of improving themselves by reading. In Scotland, and in North America, the judicious establishment of parish schools has enabled all the common people to read, and a great proportion of them to write and cast accompts.

The provisions of government are always supposed to extend beyond the present day, the laws of society being a rule for our own future conduct and that of our posterity; but it becomes men, as knowing themselves to be short-sighted, not to pretend to look very far into futurity, but to make provision for rectifying their mistakes whenever they shall be discovered, and to make the rectification as easy as possible. For when mankind find themselves aggrieved by any regulations of their ancestors, they will, no doubt, relieve themselves; but, in consequence of the injudicious provisions of past ages, they may suffer extremely before they can do this.

It is wise, therefore, in societies, if not expressly to

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appoint a formal revision of their whole constitution after a certain time, at least to do this with respect to subordinate parts, and by all means to prevent individuals from making such a disposal of their property as shall be manifestly injurious in future ages. If the English law had not interfered in former times *, such was the superstition of the people, and their subjection to the priests, that the greatest part of the landed property of this kingdom would have been given to the church, and the present generation would not have had the disposal of any part of it.

All alienation of property to those who have not the power of alienating it again should be carefully watched in every country, whether lands appropriated to religious or charitable uses, or any other object that respects future time. Otherwise, the best intentioned and the most enlightened persons may do harm when they mean to do good. For want of proper care in the management of any *fund* for future use, the design of it is liable to be perverted, those who superintend it not having the same upright views with those who appointed it; so that a very small advantage may be procured at a very great expence. If the provision was intended to remedy any evil, the evil itself may cease, and the fund become useless. The Crusades brought the leprosy into Europe, and charitable persons founded a great number of *lazarettos* for the reception and cure of lepers. But the leprosy is not so common at this day as many other diseases, and therefore it does not require any particular provision.

When revenues are left to the disposal of trustees, they will, directly or indirectly, find a benefit to themselves, or their friends, in the trust; and so many per-

* By the statute of *Mort-main*.— *Ed.*

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sons will become interested in the continuance of it, that, let the abuse of property be ever so great, a powerful interest will be formed against any reformation; and such institutions may do much harm, before it be discovered even that they do no good.

In most cases it would certainly be much better to provide temporary remedies for inconveniences, such as the relief of the poor, the maintenance of places of education, &c. If they be supported by the voluntary contributions of the living, they will be properly superintended, and they will not be continued longer than they will be found to be useful. Why should we presume that our posterity will not be as wise and as generous as ourselves? There is the greatest certainty that they will be *wiser*, and therefore the fairest presumption that they will be *better* than we are. But all *perpetuities* go upon the idea of there being a want of wisdom, or of public spirit in our descendants.

The safe *transferring*, as well as the secure *possession* of property, is a privilege which we derive from society. But it is a question among politicians, how far this privilege should extend. That all persons should have the absolute disposal of their property during their own lives, and while they have the use of their understanding, was never disputed. But some (and among them is M. Turgot*) say there should be no *testament;* a man should have no power of disposing of his property after his death, but it should be distributed by the law, according to the degrees of consanguinity. Whereas in most, if not all the civilized states of Europe, every man has an indefinite power over his property, so that he can direct the enjoyment of it in all future time.

* See *Vie de M. Turgot* (by Condorcet). 1786. p. 234.—*Ed.*

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Perhaps a medium would be the most convenient in this case. There may be good reasons (of which private persons are the best judges) why, in particular cases, their property should not descend to their children, or nearest relations. But as no man can look into futurity, and therefore he cannot judge what would be the best use of his property in generations yet unborn, and they who survive him will have a much better opportunity of judging, there is the same reason why it should then be at *their* disposal, as that for the present it should be at *his*. Let every person, therefore, bequeath his property to those persons in whose wisdom he can most confide, but not pretend to direct them in circumstances which he will never know, and therefore cannot judge of. Indeed, the wisdom of all states is frequently obliged to interfere, and to check the caprice of individuals in the disposal of their property.

A difference in industry and good fortune will introduce a difference in the conditions of men in society, so that in time some will become rich, and others poor; and in case of extreme old age, and particular accidents, many of the latter must perish without the assistance of the former. On this account wise statesmen will take the state of the *poor* into consideration. But in this respect there will be great danger of their attempting too much, and thereby encumbering themselves without remedying the evil.

If every man who is reduced to poverty, by whatever means, be allowed to have a claim upon the common stock for subsistence, great numbers, who are indifferent about any thing beyond a mere subsistence, will be improvident, spending every thing they get in the most extravagant manner, as knowing that they have a certain resource in the provision which the law makes

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for them; and the greater is the provision that is made for the poor, the more poor there will be to avail themselves of it; as, in general, men will not submit to labour if they can live without it. By this means, man, instead of being the most provident of animals, as he naturally would be, is the most improvident of them all. Having no occasion for foresight, he thinks of nothing beyond the present moment, and thus is reduced to a condition lower than that of the beasts.

This is now become very much the case in this country, and the evil is so great and inveterate, that it is not easy to find a remedy. Better, certainly, would it have been if government had not interfered in the case of the poor at all, except to relieve those who are reduced to poverty, or were become disabled, in the service of their country, as soldiers, seamen, &c. In this case there would, no doubt, be instances of great distress; but so there are at present, and generally of the most deserving, who decline the relief of the parish; while the idle, the impudent, and the clamorous, will have it. In general, if no provision was made for the poor by law, those who are the most truly deserving of relief would find it sooner than they now do, in the charity of the well-disposed. In this case many no doubt would give nothing to the poor. But in urgent cases something would be gotten even from them by shame; and by no means whatever can all men be made to bear an equal share of any burthen. The truly well-disposed would not complain of the opportunity of doing more good than others, being content with looking for their reward in a future state.

The best method would perhaps be to oblige the poor to provide for themselves, by appropriating a certain proportion of their wages to that use, as is done in the case of soldiers and seamen. As they must have a

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present subsistence, this would only be giving the poorer sort of them a better price for their labour, and would ultimately be a tax on the produce of that labour. But it would be a much better tax, and far less expensive, than the present poor rates. If this was not done by a general law, but left to the discretion of particular towns, &c., it might be regulated so as to enforce greater industry, the appropriation being varied according to the gains of workmen.

The idea of not having a perfect command of their own money would, no doubt, at first give labourers and manufacturers much disgust, and might prevent some from engaging in manufactures. But when the regulation was fully established, that aversion might vanish. At all events we must, out of a number of evils, choose the least.

LECTURE XXXIX.

As it is always convenient to have different *terms* to express different *things*, it may not be amiss to distinguish the different kinds of power, or privileges, that men in a state of society enjoy, in the following manner. The power which the community leaves a man possessed of with respect to his own conduct may be called his *civil* liberty, whereas the share that he may have in directing the affairs of the society may be called his *political* liberty. Both the terms being in the language, it will be better to assign them these distinct significations than to use them promiscuously, as is commonly done. In a state of civil liberty a man retains the most important of his natural rights. In a state of political liberty, he moreover acquires a controul over the conduct of others. It is for his advan-

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tage, therefore, to lose as little of the former, and to gain as much of the latter, as he can.

There may be states in which all the members of the community shall be politically free, or have an equal power of making laws (or of appointing those who shall make them), and yet those laws may be very oppressive, leaving individuals little power over their own actions. As, on the other hand, men may enjoy much civil liberty, being left in the undisturbed use of their faculties to think and act for themselves, and yet be excluded from all share in the government. But in this case their civil liberties, or *private rights*, will be precarious, being at the mercy of others. Political liberty is therefore the only sure guard of civil liberty, and it is chiefly valuable on that account.

It may appear, at first sight, to be of little consequence whether persons in the common ranks of life enjoy any share of political liberty or not. But without this there cannot be that persuasion of security and independence, which alone can encourage a man to make great exertions. A man who is sensible that he is at the disposal of others, over whose conduct he has no sort of controul, has always some unknown evil to dread. He will be afraid of attracting the notice of his superiors, and must feel himself a mean and degraded being. But a sense of liberty, and a knowledge of the laws by which his conduct must be governed, with some degree of controul over those who make and administer the laws, give him a constant feeling of his own importance, and lead him to indulge a free and manly turn of thinking, which will make him greatly superior to what he would have been under an arbitrary form of government.

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Under every form of government we find men united for their common advantage, and submitting to such restraints upon their natural liberty as their common good requires. But though this be the general and ultimate object of every government, yet the whole form of particular governments has some more immediate object, to which the principal parts of it are more particularly adapted, and this ought to be attended to in reading the histories of all states. Thus, according to Montesquieu, war, but rather confined to self-defence, was the object of the Spartan government; conquest that of ancient Rome; religion that of the Jews; commerce that of Marseilles; tranquillity that of China; &c. The reason is, that different nations have formed different notions of happiness, or have been led by their situations to pursue it in different ways.

Governments, and systems of laws adapted to them, are more *simple or complex*, according to the variety and connexion of the interest of the members of the community. Thus, since the members of a society which subsist by hunting interfere but little with one another, few regulations are sufficient for them. A pastoral life brings mankind nearer together, agriculture nearer still; and in a state addicted to commerce, the connexions of individuals are the most intimate and extensive, and consequently their interests the most involved that any situation of human affairs can make them. Whereas, therefore, in the former circumstances of mankind, government is of less consequence, and for that reason there is less occasion for accuracy in adjusting the several parts of it; in the latter, the smallest part of so complex a machine, as their government must necessarily be, has a variety of con-

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nexions, and the most important effects, and therefore requires to be adjusted with the utmost care.

In the slighter connexions of mankind, the parts of their forms of government are scarcely distinguishable; whereas when government is grown to its full size and dimensions, in circumstances which require it in its maturity, its parts are easily and distinctly perceived. They are then plainly seen to be the following; a power of making the necessary regulations, or laws, *i. e.* the *legislative* authority; a power of determining when those laws are violated, or of taking cognizance concerning crimes, *i. e.* the *judicial* power; and a power of enforcing the sanctions of the laws, or the *executive* power of the state.

If we consider the vast variety of ways in which it is possible to dispose of these essential parts of government, both with respect to the number of hands in which the several powers may be lodged, the subdivision of these powers, and the several powers which may be trusted in the same hands, we shall not be surprised at the prodigious diversity of the forms under which government has appeared, and that no two, which ever existed in any part of the world, should have been the same; though some of them may have borne considerable resemblance to one another. Our surprise will still be lessened if we consider the diversity that will be occasioned in forms of government by individuals retaining more or fewer of their natural and personal rights under each of them; that is, the more or fewer restrictions men are put under by the legislative power, in whatever hands it be lodged.

Beside the number of hands in which the supreme power is lodged, it will be of great consequence that, in reading history, we attend to the distribution of the

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powers among all those members of the state who have the common name of *magistrates*. I shall just mention a few particulars to show that this object is of importance.

No single history shows the importance of this remark more clearly than the Roman, in whose constitution there were the most capital defects. What, for instance, could be a greater contradiction than this, that the people could, in latter times, make laws independent of the senate, and without the intervention of any patrician; and yet that the senate could create a dictator, who was absolute master of the whole state? The people, by their tribunes, could put a negative upon the proceedings of the senate, but that senate had no negative on the votes of the people; which, Montesquieu says, was the cause of a change of government in Rome; and not only could the tribunes put a stop to the legislative power, but to the executive also, which produced the greatest evils.

Indeed it is a manifest absurdity to have more than *one will* in any state; because, when any part of the government has an absolute negative on the proceedings of the rest, all public business may be at a stand; though it is, no doubt, very useful to provide against precipitate resolutions, by a power to command a revision, or suspension of decrees. In this respect both our own constitution, and that of the states of North America, are defective.

Nothing could have preserved the Roman state in the form of a republic so long, but that the power was lodged in the hands of so many persons, who, with the same authority, had different views, and who checked one another. It was likewise happy for the Romans that the people did not generally interfere in military affairs, but allowed the senate to have the su-

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preme direction of all things relating to peace and war; whereas, at Carthage, the people would do every thing themselves.

It is a capital difference between ancient and modern monarchies, that the kings of the heroical ages had the *executive power* and also the power of *judging*, and the people the legislative power; whereas in the present monarchies, though the prince has the executive, and a share of the legislative power, he is no judge. Such a disposition of power as the former will make the government tyrannical, whatever be the form of it. For, as Montesquieu says, there can be no liberty unless the power of judging be separate from the legislative and executive power. In Italy, where they are united, there is less liberty than in monarchies.

It is also an essential maxim in every government (in order to prevent the executive power from engrossing the whole authority of the state) that the forces they are intrusted with the command of, be of the body of the people, or have the same interest with the people, as it was in Rome till the time of Marius.

The legislative is properly the supreme authority in the state. For to make and alter laws is to model the constitution. But if the persons deputed to make laws have no power of executing them, they will be careful to make none but such as they believe will be generally approved, and such as they are willing to submit to themselves. But the greatest danger would arise from the same persons having the power of making laws, of applying them to particular cases, and of executing the sentence of the law. This it is, as I have observed, that constitutes absolute *tyranny*, whether it be lodged in more, or in fewer hands.

If the executive power, without having the controul

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of the legislative, should only interfere in the judicial office, individuals would live in continual dread of the caprice of the court; since the best laws may be tortured to favour some and injure others. But the great body of the people of England, who effectually controul the legislative power, and who will not suffer their property to be sported with at the pleasure of the crown, apply the same means to preserve the judicature uncorrupt. It is a common concern, and no man would wish to establish a system of administration by which himself might ultimately be a sufferer. Consequently, every man's personal interest leads him to provide for that kind of administration by which the general good will be most effectually secured.

The various forms of government have generally received their denominations from the number of persons to whom the legislative power, and consequently the regulation of every part of the constitution (which is the most striking circumstance in every government), has been intrusted. If it be in one person, it is commonly called a *monarchy*, especially if the chief magistrate lie under considerable restrictions; whereas, if he lie under fewer, the government is called *despotic*. If the supreme power be lodged in a limited number of persons, the government is called an *oligarchy*, or an *aristocracy;* and if all the citizens have an equal vote in making laws and appointing magistrates, it is called a *democracy*.

Monarchies have been so generally hereditary, that those states in which the supreme executive power is lodged in one hand are usually termed *republican*, or *democratical*, if the person holding that power be elective. Thus the former government of Poland, and that of the United States of North America, are called *republics:* whereas, strictly speaking, they are monar-

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chies; the *king*, as he is called, in the one case, being elected for life, and the *president*, in the other, for a certain number of years.

From this method of defining the various forms of government, it is obvious to remark, that the distinctions must run into one another; but it is not material to have terms appropriated to any more accurate division. I shall just mention so much of the peculiar advantages and disadvantages of each of these forms of government, as I think will be sufficient to excite the attention of a reader of history to the subject, and make him consider their effects in the course of his reading.

To enable you to form some idea of the low state of this science of government, in ancient times, only consider how imperfect Aristotle's ideas must have been of the constitution of states, when, as Mostesquieu observes, he classes Persia and Sparta under the same head of *monarchy*. In fact, the ancients can hardly be said to have had an idea of what we now mean by the word *monarchy*. Arribas king of Epirus, in order to temper the government of one person, could hit upon nothing but a republic; and the Molossi, to bound the same power, made two kings. It is a known fact that the ancient states, though founded many of them by philosophers, did not contain that provision for the freedom and happiness of the subjects of them which has been the natural result of the random governments of some of the Northern nations.

LECTURE XL.

THE most simple of all governments is *absolute monarchy:* and this is the reason why it has generally

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been the first form of government in all countries. It requires great skill and experience to balance the several powers of a free state.

The great advantage of a monarchy is, that resolutions may be taken with secresy, and executed with dispatch, a thing of the utmost consequence, particularly in time of war; and for this reason this form of government has been deemed necessary to extensive empire. But the great disadvantage of this government is, that property is so precarious that nobody has any spirit to apply to commerce, or dare affect any appearance of riches and splendour. Also the high interest of money, which necessarily rises with the hazard that is run in lending or possessing it, is an additional discouragement to traffic. No person therefore, in countries subject to despotic government, lays himself out in projects which would benefit posterity, but, every person being intent upon enjoying the present hour, a rapacious mercenary spirit prevails among all ranks and degrees of men.

Another great unhappiness, in countries whose government is strictly despotic, is, that, there being no fundamental laws, the order of succession is not always accurately fixed. Consequently, every branch of the royal family being equally capable of being elected *king*, there are frequent civil wars, and bloody revolutions. This is the reason why in Turkey, and many other Eastern states, the emperor, immediately upon his accession to the throne, either puts to death, imprisons for life, or puts out the eyes of, all his brothers and near relations. Clovis also, king of France, though the government was not despotic, exterminated all his family, lest any of them should be chosen king*. His children and successors did the same.

* Clovis, who died in 511, was baptized in 496, with 3000 of his sol-

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Those countries which are so unhappy as to be governed in a despotic manner, Montesquieu says, are the happiest that their condition will admit of, when all ranks of men stand most in fear of their superiors; and a wise prince, in such a state, will incline rather to severity than lenity. In Persia, he says, Mereveis saw the state perish because he had not shed blood enough; and the Roman empire enjoyed the most happiness under Tiberius, Nero, and Domitian. For this reason it is consistent with such governments that all decrees should be irrevocable. Thus Ahasuerus could not revoke the edict he had once passed for exterminating the Jews. To render it of no effect, they were allowed to stand upon their defence*.

Even that law, or custom, which obliges every person to continue in the profession to which he was born, suits very well with despotic governments, where every spark of emulation is dangerous, and where the most watchful eye ought to be kept over every thing that may possibly disturb the public tranquillity. In no state whatever is tranquillity more effectually preserved, by every thing being invariable, than in China. There manners, morals, and laws, are equally fixed; and youth are instructed in the forms of salutation, and all the common rules of life, in the same regular manner as in the most important sciences.

In some despotic governments, not only is the life of the prince in continual danger, either from compe-

diers, in consequence of a vow, before the commencement of a battle, to worship the God of his wife Clotilda, if he would give him the victory.

The biographer of Clovis confesses, however, that, "malgré l'avantage inestimable du Christianisme, il fut d'une cruauté qui ne répondoit guére á la douceur que la religion auroit dû lui inspirer. Il exerça des barbaries inouies contre tous les princes ses parens." *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* ii. 689, 690. Such was the first *Most Christian King*.—*Ed.*

* See *Esther*, viii. 11.—*Ed.*

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titors to power, or the discontents of injured subjects, but the country itself is more exposed to invasion. The princes are jealous of fortified places, and will not, except in cases of the greatest necessity, admit of them, so as to be obliged to trust any person with the government of them.

Notwithstanding the opinion of a *right to power* be very common, this prepossession has generally given way to such an abhorrence of these tyrannical governments, that the very names which have been used to express them have grown in the highest degree odious; as *Tyrant* among the Greeks, and *Rex* among the Romans; insomuch that it has frequently been more safe to usurp the power itself than to assume the title of it. It was reckoned virtuous in Greece and in Rome to kill *kings* and *tyrants*, though in the latter *emperors* were respected.

We are not, however, to conclude that, because there are no regular laws in despotic governments, and no person invested with power to controul the sovereign, every man's life and property are absolutely unsafe. Manners, customs, prevailing sentiments, and especially religion, are great and often effectual restraints upon the exercise of seemingly unlimited power. The Grand Seignior can neither touch the public treasure, break the Janizaries, interfere with the seraglios of any of his subjects, nor impose a new tax.

Notwithstanding the abhorrence we have entertained of despotic governments, from studying the republican classical writers of antiquity, and from our living under a more happy constitution, there are not wanting examples of people being strongly attached to despotism. The Cappadocians are said to have refused their freedom when the Romans would have given it them. In the East there is no idea of the possibility of any other

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kind of government. A Venetian being introduced to the king of Pegu, and saying that there was no king at Venice, the prince burst into a fit of laughter.

As the prospect of honour is a great instrument of government, the fear of shame is no less powerful. No man can bear universal or very general censure, especially if he has necessary intercourse with those who dislike his conduct. On this account, no country can suffer much, or long, whatever be its form of government, if the people have the liberty of speaking and writing, and have an unrestrained right of petitioning and remonstrating. In this case justice and truth, being often presented to view, will at length be heard and attended to. This is a great security in the English government, and prevents many abuses which would otherwise take place in it.

Arbitrary governors, aware of this, take the greatest care to prevent the people from publishing their thoughts on matters of government, and sometimes even forbid their meeting together. But this is running the risk of a greater evil in order to avoid a less. The people not having the liberty of speech, by which they might give vent to, and soothe their complaints, smother their resentment for a time, and then break out into the greatest outrages. Tyrants who would not bear to be censured have often been suddenly dragged to death.

The capital advantages of monarchy, with respect to internal quiet, is that, when the law of succession is fixed and universally respected, and when the executive power is lodged in the hands of the sovereign, no subject can have the least prospect of transferring it to himself. It will therefore be the interest of all to keep within due bounds that power in which they can never share, and to see that it be employed for the

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public good. This is the capital advantage attending the constitution of this country, as it is explained at large by Mr. De Lolme. All watch the monarch, but none endeavour to supplant him. In consequence of this, all struggles between the prince and the people have terminated in some advantage, which has been common to all the subjects, and not to any one class of them in particular. The executive power being so great, the assistance of all ranks has been necessary to curb it.

Many of the established maxims of politicians the most celebrated for their sagacity are exceedingly fallacious, in consequence of being drawn from a *few facts* only. Machiavel, one of the most famed of them, says, that if ever a prince confides in one able minister, he will be dethroned by him. But, as Mr. Hume justly replies, would Fleury, one of the most absolute ministers in France, though ever so ambitious, while in his senses, entertain the least hope of dispossessing the Bourbons? Nor, we may add, is it possible that the most able, the most ambitious, and the most absolute of our ministers of state, should supplant the house of Hanover. But because the contrary had happened in ancient times, when the rule of hereditary right was not so firmly established, it was concluded that it would always happen.

The only danger arising to a people from the executive power being lodged in one hand, is that of its becoming independent of the people. But this is happily guarded against in the English constitution, in which the king is entirely dependent upon the people for all his supplies. He is therefore obliged to respect the privileges of the people, and he cannot involve them in a war in which they are unwilling to support him. This, at least, would be the case, if the House of

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Commons was the true representative of the people. But as things actually are, the influence of the court on the members of this house is so great, that they are often induced to give their sanction to measures which their constituents would not approve.

If the monarch be wholly dependent upon the people for his supplies, it is of the greatest importance that those be granted by them *in one great body*, as in England. If the supplies be voted by separate districts, they will have jealousies among themselves. Some will give more, and others less, than their due proportion; and it will be in the power of the court to gain their ends with them all, by playing one against another. On this circumstance Mr. De Lolme lays great stress.

One of the greatest evils attending monarchy, is the dissoluteness of morals almost necessarily incident to a splendid court. A family possessed of great power will, on some pretence or other, amass great wealth; and the young princes being brought up with an idea of their own importance, they will indulge themselves at the expence of the public. They will also have many dependents, whose interest it will be to enlarge their power, and increase their wealth, that they may be benefited by the dispersion of it. The persons next in power will imitate the manners of the princes, and they will be envied and imitated by others. And as the means to gain their end, will be recommending themselves to their superiors (and not their inferiors), they will study the gratification of their wishes, that is, they will administer to their vices; and thus a general profligacy of manners will be the consequence. Persons educated monarchs, and who should have virtue enough both to set a good example themselves, and to discourage vice in others, would be prodigies.

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It cannot be expected but that monarchs in general will have some objects besides the public good, and that they will employ those persons whom they deem the best qualified to serve them, whether they be men of private virtue or not.

The real power of a country is seldom in those hands in which the constitution seems to have placed it; so that if those who have business to do with any state apply in the first instance to those whose office it is to receive them, they will seldom gain their point. They must apply to those who, by their talents or assiduity, have recommended themselves to the governing powers, so as to ease them of the burthen of public affairs. This is more particularly the case in despotic governments, in which princes are so educated as to be seldom capable of business. It will therefore be done by those who are about them, and who have insinuated themselves into their favour; and these being chiefly actuated by their private passions, and especially their affection or dislike to particular persons, the interest of the state will be little consulted by them. How often have generals been appointed, and even wars engaged in, at the caprice of women, and those the most profligate and unprincipled!

LECTURE XLI.

A PERFECT democracy is an extreme directly opposite to absolute monarchy, and, next to it, is the easiest to be fallen into, particularly by small states. Hence all the petty states of Greece, without exception, when they put down their tyrants, fell into some kind of democracy, though no two of their forms of government were exactly the same.

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The capital advantage of this form of government is, that as there is the same free access to honour and employments to every member of the state, free scope is given to the exertion of every man's abilities. Here, therefore, we may naturally expect the utmost efforts of the human faculties, especially in those talents which are most calculated to strike the vulgar, and acquire general applause.

The art of *haranguing* is above all others a necessary qualification, being almost the only road to preferment. Hence arises *eloquence*, and those other branches of the belles-lettres and politer arts which are connected with it, and are not of the effeminate and unmanly kind. For the eloquence of a free state must be adapted to affect the passions and imaginations of men of a natural and uncorrupted taste: otherwise it would have no effect.

Besides, in a republic, the necessity of restraining the magistrates must give rise to general *laws;* and from law arises security, from security curiosity, and from curiosity knowledge, as Mr. Hume (who seems particularly fond of this kind of government) marks the gradation. But a commonwealth is unfavourable to *politeness*, and softness of manners. This kind of refinement grows more naturally from that spirit of servility which is the effect of despotic government.

With respect to defence, we see, in the history of the earlier period of Greece, that an enthusiastic love of liberty, in an union of several free states, has some advantages which may compensate for any inconvenience that may attend the want of an absolute commander; though we can hardly say, with Montesquieu, that republics in a league enjoy all the advantages of a commonwealth within themselves, and the advantages of a monarchy with respect to defence.

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It will be a great mistake to conclude that where there is no despotic sovereign, the people, being free from that restraint upon their conduct, may safely indulge themselves in greater liberty. For in no form of government whatever is a perfect subjection more necessary. All the members of a republic must live in the strictest obedience; but then it is to their equals, and to the laws. Xenophon observes a great difference between the reverence and observance of the laws in the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, to the disadvantage of the latter.

When the laws cease to be executed in a republic, Montesquieu says all is lost. This can only happen from the corruption of the republic; and there is seldom any power to remedy the evil, as in a monarchy. Hence, in all republics, pardon is with difficulty obtained, if at all. In most of them, if this power do subsist, it is so restrained, and so difficultly exerted, as almost to make good the complaint of the young man in Livy,—that a man must *sola innocentia vivere.* In Holland, without a stadtholder, there is no such power as pardoning, notwithstanding it be essential to policy, and in some cases as necessary as justice itself.

A love of power produces more inconveniences in republics than in monarchies, because places of power and trust are within the reach of greater numbers,—they are to be obtained by making interest with the common people, and their resolutions, having no controul, are apt to be sudden and violent. The Grecian states, and also the republics of Italy in later times, were exposed to perpetual distractions and revolutions in consequence of it; there being always a considerable number of banished persons, their friends and partisans, who threatened an invasion.

Virtue and public spirit are the necessary supports

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of all republican governments. Hence it was morally impossible that Rome should have continued free in the time of Cæsar; and the opposition to monarchical power by a few of the better citizens only made the dying struggles of liberty more violent, and more destructive to the state. Public spirit makes the riches of individuals to become the riches of the public: but when public spirit is lost, the riches of the public become the riches of individuals; and in this case, an increase of numbers, and of wealth, may be attended with a diminution of power. Athens had as many citizens when Demetrius Phalereus numbered them as they had in their most flourishing state, and it is certain they were not less rich; but public spirit was gone, and with that all their former power and importance: and yet that policy is violent which aggrandizes the public by the poverty and distress of individuals.

From the necessity of virtue and public spirit in republics arises the extreme caution of all wise legislators to keep luxury out of them, and to preserve as great an equality in the riches and the power of all the members of the state as possible; and hence, indeed, the precarious situation of all popular governments, and their frequent dissolution, whenever conquest, or commerce, and arts shall have taken away that equality. The Roman commonwealth was ruined by the excessive riches and power of individuals, and the wealth of the Medici made them masters of Florence. Moreover, when the members of republics become indolent and luxurious, they will make use of the public treasure for improper purposes; so that the nearer they seem to be to derive the greatest advantages from their liberty, the nearer they sometimes are to ruin. Witness Athens in the time of Demosthenes. Commerce there-

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fore, which never fails to introduce luxury and inequality into men's circumstances, does not perfectly suit with the true spirit of a commonwealth. The immense wealth of the family of Medici in Florence, wealth acquired by commerce, made them eventually masters of their country.

If the republic be a trading one, it is an excellent law, that every son should be alike sharer in his father's inheritance; and a boundless permission to dispose of estates by will destroys by degrees that equality which is necessary to a republic.

Hence also the necessity of having methods of dispersing immense estates in republics. In the best Grecian republics, the rich were under a necessity of spending their money in festivals, choirs of music, chariot and horse races, expensive magistracies, and building ships; and at Rome the great people bore all the expensive offices, and the poor paid nothing.

Nothing can give us a clearer idea of the state of things at Athens in this respect than a passage in the banquet of Xenophon, in which Charmidas is introduced making the following speech. "I am content with my poverty. When I was rich, I was obliged to make my court to informers, the state was always laying some new burthen upon me, and I could not absent myself from it: since I am become poor, I have acquired authority; nobody threatens me, I threaten others, and I go where I please; the rich rise and give place to me. I am a king, I was a slave. I paid tribute to the republic, now it nourishes me."

Great rewards for services, even in monarchies, much more in democracies, are signs of their decline. It shows that men are not sufficiently actuated by a sense of virtue and honour. Demosthenes, Æschines, and eight more ambassadors to the king of Macedon,

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received less than a drachma a day, though a common soldier received one and sometimes two drachmas a day: and yet Demosthenes calls this a considerable sum. Caligula and Nero gave the most, and the Antonines the least, of all the Roman emperors.

Exorbitant power is still more immediately threatening to a republic than exorbitant riches. The persons possessed of it are far more dangerous than in lawful monarchies, because there is nothing to controul them. Considering this, we shall not wonder at the opposition made by Hanno to Hannibal. In what danger would the republic of Carthage have been if Hannibal had taken Rome, when he made so many alterations in its constitution after his defeat! At Ragusa, the chief magistrate of the republic is changed every month. This is proper only in a small state, surrounded by enemies who might corrupt their chiefs. The keeping of the public treasure at Athens was intrusted with no person for more than a single day.

It is of great consequence that the number of voters in a republic be fixed. At Rome, sometimes all the citizens were out of the walls, at other times almost all Italy was within them; which was one principal cause of the fall of the republic. For by that means men of power and ambition were never at a loss for the means of passing any law, or gaining any particular point, that they had occasion for. Representation however, which was not known in ancient times, would have prevented all this inconvenience.

Secret suffrages are also said by Montesquieu to have been one means of the ruin of Rome: for the common people, then very corrupt, were under no restraint from shame. The dissolution of a republic by luxury and refinement, he says, is the true *euthanasia* of that form of government. For those manners prepare them to

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submit to monarchy with less reluctance; but the convulsions of dying liberty in a rough, a brave, and an enterprising people, are dreadful.

For this reason, and because the clergy are not powerful enough to restrain arbitrary power in England, it is said by him that if ever the English be slaves, they will be the greatest, and most miserable of all slaves.

The preservation of republican forms of government requires that no important offices continue long in the same hands. In general, men are lovers of *power*, as well as of *wealth*, because they can make the power of which they are possessed subservient to most of their purposes, and they will pursue their own gratification at the expence of that of others. In the distribution of power, therefore, care should be taken that no persons have an opportunity of possessing it any longer than it may be for the advantage of the whole, and that all powers be easily revocable whenever it shall be perceived that they are abused. For this purpose it seems most convenient that all offices of great trust and power be held by *rotation*. Because it will not be for the interest of any man to add to the power of an office, to which he must himself soon become subject. While he enjoys it he will consider not so much his condition for a short time, as for the greater part of his life, and that of his children and posterity after him. Whereas, if any power or honour be *hereditary*, it will be his interest to take every opportunity of enlarging it, at the expence of the rest of the community. This is an unanswerable objection to all governments by an hereditary monarchy or aristocracy.

It is very possible, however, that the prejudices of some people in favour of monarchical government, and

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of the rights of certain families to kingly power, may be so strong, as that it will be better to risk every thing than change the form of government; because civil wars, the greatest of all evils, might be the consequence of it. When almost the whole power of the state is lodged in one hand (as in those governments which are termed *despotic*, or which approach to it) there is the greatest probability that, educated as such princes will be, they will make a very absurd use of their power, such as will by no means be for the interest of the community; and if a succession consists of able men, their power will continually grow more exorbitant. But whilst the people *choose* to be governed in that mode, and conceive, for whatever reason, that a certain family has a *right* so to govern them, it would be wrong to attempt a change in the government, and still more so to deprive any particular person, or family, of those rights, of which, with the consent of the people, they have been long possessed. All that can be done in such a case is to define with the greatest accuracy the law of succession to power, that there may be no dispute about the person entitled to it, and to prevent as far as possible all increase of it.

All persons who are acquainted with any kind of public business, in which numbers of people give their opinions and decide upon the spot, well know with what difficulty it is conducted, and how uncertain the decisions are. Few think beforehand; many are fond of distinguishing themselves; and numbers never consider the question before them, but who are for it, and who against it. If a number of the more intelligent of the people prepare matters beforehand, business may be done with tolerable ease; but then it is in reality transacted by those few, and the rest are taken by surprise.

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For in the same manner they might have been induced to adopt any measures, not manifestly contrary to their interest.

Where great numbers of persons are concerned, it is of infinite advantage that they do not deliberate and decide *themselves*, but choose a few to act for them. These having a *trust*, and knowing that the eyes of the whole community are upon them, will be desirous of discharging their trust with reputation to themselves, and consequently with advantage to their constituents. It will be their business to consider all public measures, and to settle a regular method of doing business. A crown, or a court, having to treat with these representatives, chosen out of the people for their wisdom and respectability, will find that they have to do with their equals, and will not expect to cajole and deceive them, as they might have done in the collective body of the people. It is absolutely necessary, however, that these representatives of the people be confined to that office, and always feel themselves to be a part of the community which they represent. Otherwise, the people, in choosing them, will choose their own masters. If, in consequence of representing the people, they have an opportunity of acquiring advantages to which the rest of the community have no access, they will have a different interest from that of their constituents, and will, no doubt, consult it.

In a state of political liberty, the people must have a controul over the government, by themselves or their representatives. In large states this can only be done in the latter method; and then it comes to be considered who are proper to represent the nation, in order to make laws for their countrymen and to dispose of their property. I own I see no occasion for any restriction whatever, as it cannot be supposed that, if

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people be left to themselves, they will choose improper representatives. If they do, it is fit that they should learn by experience to make a better choice on a future occasion. If the representative body be large, like our House of Commons, the worst choice of a few members can be but of little consequence.

Least of all should people be limited to their choice by a regard to *fortune*. For they may have the justest reasons to put the greatest confidence in persons who have little or no property; and in general they will of themselves be sufficiently influenced by this consideration, without any interference of the law. If a regard to wealth be any rule, it should not extend to very great fortunes. For in general persons of moderate fortunes are better educated, have fewer artificial wants, and are more independent, than those who are born to great estates. Besides, they are more natural representatives of the middle class of people, they are more likely to feel for them, and to consult their interest.

It is of the greatest importance that those who represent any nation be of the same class and rank in life with those by whom they are appointed, and that they have frequent intercourse with them. By this means they will catch their spirit, and enter into their views. They will also be restrained by a sense of shame from proposing, or consenting to, any thing that they know their electors would not approve. They could not show themselves in public company after any conduct of this kind. On the other hand, the members of an aristocracy, sufficiently numerous to have society among themselves, would feel only for themselves, and would have no restraint on their measures respecting the lower ranks of the community. They might even make it a point of honour to pre-

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serve and enlarge their privileges, at the expence of those beneath them.

It is also of great importance that, in an assembly of representatives, *property* only, or reputed *understanding*, be considered, and not *classes*, or denominations of men. If the clergy be admitted as clergy, lawyers as lawyers, soldiers as soldiers, &c., they will have what the French call the *esprit de corps*. They will unite to consult their own interest; and some of the bodies will make concessions to others, at the expence of the rest of the community. Whereas, when they are chosen merely because the people at large think them the best qualified to provide for their general interests, they will consult the wishes of those who appoint them, and the interest of each part will be attended to in proportion to its importance to the whole*.

From the remains of superstition, the clergy are still considered as a distinct order of men in this country, and they are in a manner represented in parliament, by the bishops having seats in the House of

* It is an article of considerable importance to determine who should have votes in the choice of representatives. Many are advocates for *universal suffrage*, while others would restrict this privilege to those who have some property. Every member of the community has, no doubt, an interest in the choice, and therefore may plead a right to a vote. But this, as well as every thing else relating to society, should be decided by a regard to the interest of the whole, or that of the majority. Persons possessed of no property being commonly ill educated, and ill informed, will, in general, vote as they are directed by those on whom they depend, and will be liable to be influenced by such improper motives as no laws can prevent; and their real interest will be sufficiently provided for by equal laws. And when the possession of property has a privilege annexed to it, it will operate as a motive to industry and economy. For the same reason it may be wise to receive no votes for any magistrate but from persons who can write the names themselves. By this means every person who had the least spark of ambition, would make a point of acquiring the arts of reading and writing, and thus would be in the way of getting general knowledge, the diffusion of which is the best security for the permanence of any good form of government.—*Amer. Edit.*

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Lords. It is alleged that this is necessary in order to take care of their interests. But on the same principles physicians, lawyers, dissenters, and all other classes of men, ought to have seats in parliament. If the clergy recommend themselves to the people by making their office useful, they will have sufficient influence, without any of their body having seats in parliament; and if they come to be considered in an offensive light, the number of the bishops by whom they are represented is too small to prevent the passing of any law, even to exclude them. If they had a just sense of the nature of their office, and consulted their true dignity, they would retire of their own accord. At present, their seat in the house only flatters their pride, and gives the minister so many more votes.

LECTURE XLII.

It is easy to see that all other forms of government must be somewhere in a medium between the extremes of *despotism* and *democracy*, and that they must, consequently, partake of the advantages and disadvantages of both, according as they approach towards them. The most distinguished mediums in the disposition of power are in the *aristocracies* of some ancient and modern states, and the present *European monarchies*.

An aristocracy, however, differs nothing from a despotism, except that the same absolute power is lodged in a few more hands. All the rest of the people are as much at their mercy; and as the people have more masters, they are generally more oppressed.

The more in number are the members of an aristocracy, the less is their power, and the greater their safety; the fewer they are, the greater is their power,

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and the less their safety, till we come to pure despotism, where there is the greatest power and the least safety. If the members of the aristocracy enter into trade, and consequently the riches as well as the power of the state centre in themselves, they will oppress the poor, to the discouragement of all industry. For the same reason, it is still worse when an arbitrary sovereign applies to trade; for trade, of all things, requires to be conducted by persons who are upon terms of equality.

In proportion to the numbers of the aristocracy, they ought to relax of the rigour of despotism; and when they are pretty numerous, the greatest moderation ought to be their principle. They ought to affect no unnecessary distinctions, least of all those which are honourable to themselves in proportion as they are disgraceful to the common people; as the patricians of Rome did when they restrained themselves from marrying with the plebeians.

Personal privileges and immunities, which are not necessary for the good of the whole, are always justly offensive. To a person in an office which has for its object the public good, deference will easily be paid; but in all other cases a distinction of *rank* naturally excites jealousy. It creates pride in the one, and servility in the other, which debases the characters of both.

It is well observed by M. Turgot*, that all hereditary distinctions, if they have any civil effect, and confer any right, and all personal prerogatives, if they are not the necessary consequence of exercising a public function, are a diminution of the natural rights of

* *Life of M. Turgot*, p. 307.

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other men, a proceeding contrary to the primitive end of society, and of consequence a real injustice *.

In the Eastern monarchies there are no hereditary nobles. In China the grandchildren of the greatest mandarins are generally on a level with the common people †.

How galling the power of the nobility is to the common people we see in the preference which some nations have given to pure monarchy, or despotism, to those forms of government in which the nobility had the chief power. This was conspicuous in the late revolutions in Denmark ‡, and Sweden §; in which, with the hearty concurrence of the people, the power of the nobility was transferred to the king. It was also conspicuous in the part which the commons of England took, in concurrence with the king, to lessen the power of the ancient barons.

From the distribution of power into so many hands, *libels* are most liable to be restrained in this kind of

* Thus expressed by his biographer, Condorcet: "Toute distinction héréditaire, si elle a quelque effet civil, si elle donne quelque droit, toute prérogative personnelle, si elle n'est pas la suite nécessaire de l'exercice d'une fonction publique, est une atteinte au droit naturel des autres hommes, un pas fait contre le but primitif de la société, et par conséquent une véritable injustice." *Vie de M. Turgot*, 1786, pp. 235, 236.—*Ed.*

† *Memoires sur les Chinois*, vol. iv. p. 311.

‡ There it was determined, in 1660, "that the king has the privilege reserved to himself to explain the law; nay, to alter and change it as he shall find good." See Lord Molesworth's *Account of Denmark as it was in* 1692. 1738. (ch. vi.) p. 30; also, ch. vii. on "The Manner how the Kingdom of Denmark became hereditary and absolute." *Ibid.* pp. 31—47. —*Ed.*

§ Dr. Priestley refers to the revolution in 1772. See J. R. Sheridan's *Full and genuine Account*. As early as 1674 "the clergy, burghers, and peasants" of Sweden, "persuaded that the miseries they had suffered proceeded from the too great power of the nobility," are said to have given their king "an opportunity to lay the foundations of an absolute sovereignty." See *An Account of Sweden as it was in* 1688, annexed to *An Account of Denmark*, pp. 243, 244.—*Ed.*

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government; because the magistrates are neither too high, nor too low, to be hurt by them.

Contrary to the maxims of a republic, all the suffrages in an aristocracy, says Montesquieu, ought to be secret, to prevent cabals.

Poland was the worst constituted aristocracy, where the people were slaves to their nobility. But the condition of that country was greatly bettered in this, and many other respects, by the late revolution*.

The present *European monarchies* are systems of government totally different from any thing of which the ancients could form an idea. Every thing they say about monarchies is every day contradicted in them. They were formed in the following manner.

The German nations were in general free, and voted every thing in person†. When they were dispersed in their conquests they could not do this, but sent deputies; and hence arose the custom of *representation*, by means of which equal political liberty may be made consistent with the most extensive governments.

The common people were originally *vassals*, or *slaves*‡, and were considered as belonging to the lands on which they were settled; and they were transferred with them from one proprietor to another, which

* Now, however, that country is entirely absorbed in that of Russia, Prussia, and Austria.—*Amer. Edit.*

† "De minoribus rebus, principes consultant, de majoribus, omnes; ita tamen, ut ea quoque, quorum penes plebem arbitrium est, apud principes pertractentur." Tacitus *De Moribus Germ.* 1799. p. 8. (On minor affairs, the chiefs deliberate, on more important concerns, the whole people. Yet the questions on which the people determine are first discussed among the chiefs.)—*Ed.*

‡ Cæsar says: "In omni Gallia, plebs penè servorum habetur loco; quæ per se nihil audet, et nulli adhibetur consilio" *De Bell. Gallic.* lib. vi. sect. 13. (Throughout Gaul the people are regarded as scarcely above slaves, not venturing to decide on any measure, nor even admitted to deliberate.) Thus the *omnes* and *plebs* of Tacitus were probably few besides the privileged orders.—*Ed.*

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is the case in many parts of the continent to this day. But christianity, and several other circumstances, contributed to better the condition of slaves in the western parts of Europe; and by degrees they all obtained their liberty. Not having been used to arms, as the freemen had all been, they became addicted to arts and trade, by which they acquired considerable property, and with that, influence and power. At length, and by degrees, they sent their representatives to the great council of the nation; and thus the civil liberty of the people, the prerogatives of the nobility and clergy, together with the power of the king, who was originally nothing more than their general, was so tempered, that it is astonishing that the regulations made by a conquering people, should have terminated in a better form of government than any thing that had ever been devised by man before.

These governments have the advantage of despotism in time of war, and property is as secure in them as it can be in any republic. The ancients, says Montesquieu, could never have imagined what we now see; that monarchy is capable of order, method, and constancy, to so surprising a degree, property secured, industry encouraged, the arts flourishing, and the prince living secure among his subjects, like a father among his children.

The nobility being the descendants of the greater barons or freemen, make a distinct order of men in this kind of monarchy; and having been accustomed to arms, and not to trade, a sense of honour is the grand spring of action in them. If commerce decay in these monarchies, it is not because property is less secure, but because the profession is less honourable.

These governments consisting of so many parts, each

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of which has a negative on all resolutions of consequence, they are a check upon, and balance one another; and every public measure has the opportunity of being repeatedly and thoroughly discussed.

According to Montesquieu, the power and happiness of monarchical states is in a great measure independent both of public spirit and of a principle of virtue. Nay, the very vices of the members of them (at least those things which would be vices in a republic) are, he says, subservient to their welfare. In a monarchy there is at least less to be apprehended from luxury, and the chief promoter of it, a free intercourse between the two sexes. The Suiones, a German nation, Tacitus says, honoured riches, and lived under the government of one person*. It is curious to see, in Dio Cassius, with what art Augustus evaded the request of the senators to stop the progress of luxury, which was become necessary at Rome when a monarchy. In a republic, candidates for offices look downward, and study the useful arts; but in a monarchy they look upward, and study to make themselves agreeable. Though, therefore, strong sense may succeed best in republics, refinement of taste may be expected in greater perfection in monarchies.

Besides, where there is a free intercourse between the sexes, the mutual desire of pleasing produces a continual change of fashions and manners, very consistent with monarchy, but incompatible with despotism. Moreover, whereas, in a monarchy, women are the promoters of luxury; in despotic governments

* Who easily maintained his power over a *disarmed* people, depending on the ocean for security against sudden invasion. "Est apud illos et opibus honos: eoque unus imperitat, nullis jam exceptionibus, non precario jure parendi, nec arma ut apud ceteros Germanos in promiscuo, sed clausa sub custode, et quidem servo: quia subitos hostium incursus prohibet oceanus." *De Moribus Germ.* pp. 30, 31.—*Ed.*

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they are merely the objects of it. Were women to behave with that freedom and spirit of intrigue in Asia that they are remarkable for in Europe, and particularly in France, the government would soon be obliged to take notice of it.

The Roman government never was properly monarchical. It was sometimes chiefly republican, and, in some periods of the empire, in fact, a military republic. Sometimes it was aristocratical, and sometimes despotic; but never any thing like an European monarchy. And the true spirit of politeness and gallantry, which took their rise in modern monarchies, was unknown among them.

Stability could not be preserved in monarchical governments, any more than in despotic states, unless the subjects of them had a passionate regard for the true heir of the royal family; and the great happiness of European monarchies arises from the order of succession being absolutely fixed, and universally known. While in the progress of our ideas, in this northern part of the world, we were fluctuating between the right of representation and nearness of blood; that is, whether, for instance, a younger son, or a minor grandson by an elder son, should succeed to an inheritance (which was not generally settled, as it now is, in favour of the latter, that is, of the right of representation, as it is called, till about the 12th century), every part of Europe was torn to pieces by civil wars.

It should seem that monarchies, such as subsist in Europe, are not proper for very extensive dominion, though they admit a greater extent of territory than republics. Though the French nobility, fired with glory and emulation, can bear the fatigues and dangers of war, they would hardly, says Voltaire, submit to languish in the garrisons of Hungary or Lithuania,

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forgotten at court, and sacrificed to the intrigues of every minion, or mistress, who approached the throne.

LECTURE XLIII.*

THE preservation of any constitution of government must depend upon the respect which the people have for it; and it cannot be overturned till those who have the power of doing it are both disposed to do it, and have an opportunity of effecting their purpose. But the common people, who have other objects to attend to, will, in general, bear a great deal before they feel themselves disposed to take the trouble, and run the risk, of redressing public wrongs; and if they were so disposed, they might be incapable of union. Whereas the governors of a country, being few, and having a common interest, can readily assemble, and take measures to keep themselves in power. There are, therefore, few rebellions that succeed; and when they do, those who have felt the grievance have seldom thought of the proper method of redress, or prevention; so that the chance of being well settled after a violent revolution is very small. The people may be careful enough to avoid one extreme, but they will be in great danger of falling into another. Thus the rebellions against monarchy in Greece ended in republican forms of government, so ill constructed, that they suffered more under them than in the preceding tyrannies. The same was the case with many of the small states of Italy, when they emancipated themselves

* For a Lecture "On the Constitution of the United States of America," being the 43rd of the American edition. See *Appendix*.—*Ed.*

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from the authority of the German emperors. On the contrary, the subversion of republics has generally produced tyrannies.

When a state cannot be preserved by the universal, or very general, desire of the people, it may be saved by the balancing of those powers which would tend to destroy it; and as all the different orders of men naturally wish for more power, and every individual wishes to rise above his neighbour, all governments may, in fact, be considered as in this state. It is therefore of importance so to arrange the different parts of the constitution, as that a struggle for power may be prevented from having any dangerous effect. And perhaps it may be asserted, that the more distinct interests there are in a state, the easier it will be to preserve the balance of power within it. For when there are only two interests, they will each have but one object; and any advantage they secure will not only be permanent, but be the means of gaining some farther advantage, till the whole be on one side. Whereas a third interest may preserve the balance, if no one of the three be able to overpower the other two. In this case any one can give a decided superiority to either of the other two parties, and yet may find its interest in preserving its independence, and not uniting with either of them.

Our constitution is said to have this advantage, as the power of the state is lodged in the king, lords, and commons. We are not, however, to be governed by *names*, but by *things*. Real *power* depends upon *opinion*, or *interest*. Regal power depends upon both. The mere *respect for a king*, in consequence of his person being held sacred, does alone, in some countries, render his person and his power inviolate, what-

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ever excesses he be guilty of, as we may see in the history of the kings of Morocco. Something of this superstitious respect for royalty is found in this country, but before the late revolution there was much more of it in France. But besides this, the power of our kings depends upon the power they have of attaching persons to them by the disposal of honours and lucrative offices, as well as by the wealth, of which, as individuals, they may be possessed. These are the chief supports of the power of the crown in this country. If the king had nothing but his nominal right of a negative on the votes of both houses of parliament, it would signify nothing. He would not be a king one day after he should insist upon it. But his *influence* is such, by other means, that nothing is ever presented to him for his confirmation, which he is not previously acquainted with, and approves.

The power of the lords is better founded, as they have more real property, and more natural dependents. But in this country the property of the lords is now but little, compared with that of the commons; and should they take any part against the people, their privileges would soon be abolished. But their influence in the House of Commons, directly or indirectly on the one hand, and with the king on the other, is such, that there is no great danger of any bill being brought before them which they would find it their interest violently to oppose. Besides, bodies of men will always concede to each other rather than risk the consequence of an open rupture.

The people in general, having had long experience of the benefit of this form of government, though great numbers of them are often aggrieved, and complain of the privileges of the nobility, or of the power

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of the crown; yet their representatives being by no means unanimous, and the majority of them generally with the court, nothing can easily be effected in their favour.

As so much depends upon the House of Commons, and so great a part of the real power of the crown itself depends upon its influence among them, it might seem to be in the power of the members to arrogate more to themselves, and to exercise the very powers that they bestow on others. Had they the power of perpetuating themselves, there would be great danger of their attempting something of this kind. But besides that their power as individuals would be small, and of no long continuance, they are only the deputies of the great body of the people, who respect the government as it is; so that however willing the members of the House of Commons might be to take more power into their own hands, they could not do it. The *sense of the people*, as we call it, though no nominal part of the constitution, is often felt to be a real check upon public measures by whomsoever they are conducted; and though it is only expressed by talking, writing, and petitioning, yet tumults and insurrections so often arise when the voice of the people is loud, that the most arbitrary governments dread the effects of them.

When governments are of long standing, the acquiescence in them is so general, that abuses in them may rise to a much greater height without endangering the constitution, than in new ones, which can have acquired no respect but from the persuasion of their utility; so that when forms of government have begun to change, they have often gone on to change, and the country has been a long time in an unsettled state, till the people, being weary of changes from

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which they have derived no benefit, are disposed to acquiesce in any thing that is tolerable *.

A great means of preventing abuses of government, and thereby lessening the danger of a subversion of it, is the liberty of speaking and writing. By this means the public opinion being known in good time, the abuse will not rise so high as to require a violent remedy. Governors may be teased by *libels;* but this is better than to be liable to be seized and strangled before any danger be apprehended, which is the case in Turkey and the East. There actions often precede words.

Contentions for power may be as distressing to a country as attempts to change its form of government. Such are all civil wars in the East, and such were those between the houses of York and Lancaster in this country, by which it suffered more than in the civil wars in the time of Charles I., the object of which was the redress of national grievances, and which terminated in a subversion of the government in which they rose.

In the former case it is the ambition of individuals that is the spring of action, and this could not operate unless there were such stations of wealth and power in a country, as would furnish an object for such ambition. In a country, therefore, in which there are no such stations (in which a man can enjoy for himself, and transmit to his posterity, advantages much superior to those of the rest of the community), the only object of ambition must be to *create* such situations, by persuading the people of the necessity, or the use, of them. For even force implies the voluntary concurrence of great numbers, who must have a prospect

* This is abundantly exemplified in the late revolutions in France. —*Amer Edit.*

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of being gainers by a change; and with the advantage of force it will be more or less difficult, in proportion to the general prepossession in favour of the present government.

In the monarchical states of Europe it is highly improbable that any form of properly *equal government* should be established for many ages; the people in general, and especially in France, being proud of their monarchs, even when they are oppressed by them*. On the contrary, in North America, there seems to be no prospect of the peaceable establishment of any form of government, besides one in which the rights of all shall be equal. The attachment of that country to the house of Hanover was formerly much stronger than that of this country in general†. But the sense of the whole country is now strongly against monarchy

* This was written before the late revolution in France, since which the general aspect of things is greatly changed indeed, with respect to all the governments in Europe.

† Dr. Mayhew, a distinguished *ante-revolution* patriot, in a sermon on "the Repeal of the Stamp Act," preached at Boston a few weeks before his decease in 1766, says: "I am indeed well apprised of the firm attachment of these colonies in general, and of our province in particular, to the king's person, and to the protestant succession in his illustrious house; for the preservation of which there is hardly a native of New England, who would not, upon constitutional principles, which are those of liberty, chearfully hazard his life; or even more lives than one, if he had them to lay down in so good a cause."

Dr. Mayhew so inadequately appreciated the resources of his country, as to utter this humiliating exclamation: "It would be our misery, if not our ruin, to be cast off by Great Britain, as unworthy her farther regards. What then would it be, in any supposeable way, to draw upon ourselves the whole weight of her just resentment." Again: "We are bound, in honor to the king and parliament, to suppose that it was not for want of ability to enforce a late act and to crush us, that it was repealed; but from a conviction of the inexpedience, the dangerous consequences, and many inconveniences of continuing it." Under these terrors of extermination, or even of *Independence*, Dr. M. thus advises: "Let us not entertain a thought of novelties, or innovations, or be *given to change*." See *The Snare Broken*, a Thanksgiving Discourse, Boston, 1766. pp. 24, 29—31. *M. Repos.* xiv. 664, 665.—*Ed.*

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in any form. They will hardly receive a stranger in the character of *king*, and there are no families of sufficient distinction among themselves *.

A sufficient degree of reverence for *any* form of government in the body of the people will secure the continuance of it. For a few could never overpower the many, and make any change which the great body of the people should disapprove of. But a government ought to be formed in such a manner as should be most likely to gain, and to preserve, that degree of respect which will insure its continuance. It should provide against any man gaining that degree of power or influence, which would enable him to lessen the respect for the constitution in the minds of his countrymen, and induce any considerable number of them, from a regard to their personal interest, to favour his schemes of innovation. For whenever any person shall be in a situation in which he can make it the interest of others to increase his power, at the expence of the rest of the community, we may presume that he will succeed; since the generality of mankind will prefer their private interest to the public good. No government, therefore, can be expected to stand, the constitution of which does not make it the interest of the great body of the people to preserve it, and even to watch over it, in order to prevent any encroachment upon it.

* The Society of *Cincinnati*, instituted 1783, by "the American officers before the dissolution of the army" excited, such was the wakeful jealousy of republicans, no small opposition, as if it were calculated to produce "a race of hereditary nobles, founded on the military," and distinguished from "the people, or plebeians." See Dr. Holmes's *Amer. Annals*, 1808. ii. 381, 382. Condorcet thus refers to the Institution: "L' époque de la paix étoit pour ces Etats un moment de crise, et il étoit difficile d'en prévoir les suites. Même aujourd'hui il le seroit encore de prononcer sur leur avenir, puisque le sort de la liberté Américaine est attaché à l'existence de l'aristocratie héréditaire et militaire, que les officiers de l'armée ont essayé d'établir sous le nom d'Ordre de Cincinnatus." *Vie de Turgot*, p. 262, note.—*Ed.*

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So much does the stability of government depend upon *opinion*, and so many are the elements, as we may say, that enter into the composition of such opinions as these, that no wise man will pretend to foresee the consequences of any great change in a complex form of government; because he could not tell how far the minds of great numbers of people would go along with his own in their approbation of it. This makes it prudent, when any great changes are made, to retain at least the ancient *forms* and *names of offices*. For to these it is, in a great measure, that the public opinion is attached. Though Cæsar and Augustus could safely assume the title of *emperor*, with the most despotic power, they did not dare to take that of *king*; and in this country Oliver Cromwell was contented with the style of *protector**. In the Roman empire all the forms of the ancient free government were kept up, and it was always called a free *republic*.

So much attached does the body of a people get to the forms of government, to which they have been long accustomed, that it will be impossible for them all at

* Or rather, deterred from assuming the title of *king*, as Whitlock, Lord Broghill, &c. recommended, by the remonstrances of some of his adherents, who were, in principle, republicans. See *Monarchy Asserted*, or the account of "A Conference had at Whitehall, with Oliver, late Lord Protector, and a Committee of Parliament." 1660. *passim*. Cromwell thus concludes the conference, "8 of May 1657: I cannot undertake this government with the title of a *King*, and that is mine answer to this great and weighty business." See, also, *Ludlow*, 1698 ii. 582—591; *Critical Review of Oliver Cromwell*, 1747, pp. 280—314; *Harris*, iii. 471—481. "Cromwell," says this biographer, "was baulked in his hopes of the diadem by his near relations and intimate friends! Men of principle we may suppose, who chose rather to disoblige him, and forfeit their employments, than to build again what they had destroyed. Rare examples of integrity." Harris, however, conjectures that "had the crown been placed on the head of the Protector,—it is not improbable it might have strengthened his own government, and enabled him to transmit to posterity many valuable privileges." Thus, perhaps, England had escaped that deep disgrace, the restoration of the Stuarts.—*Ed.*

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once to exchange a worse for a better, and even which by its effects should be acknowledged to be a better.

Though the governments of France and England were originally the same *, or very nearly so, they are now become so different, and have been so long so, that it would be absolutely impossible for the English constitution to be received in France, or the French in England. If the experiment could be made, the two nations would feel as awkwardly as would two men of a different make of body on exchanging clothes. If the change extended to the *minutiæ* of things, the new officers would not be able to act their parts without constant prompting; and to teach the people in general a knowledge of their new laws, would be no less difficult than teaching them a new language †.

It is of the greatest consequence, therefore, that no change of importance be attempted in any long established government, till the minds of the people be prepared for it by the experience of some inconvenience in the old one; so as to have produced a general wish for a change; and, if possible, it should be

* See *Franco-Gallia, or An Account of the ancient free state of France, and most other parts of Europe, before the loss of their liberties.* Written originally in Latin, by the famous civilian Francis Hotoman, in 1574, and translated into English by the author of the *Account of Denmark*, 1711. There was a second edition, 1721, with a larger preface, by Lord Molesworth, justly admired for its free political sentiments.—*Ed.*

† The revolution in the states of North America was easy, because there were few things to change. Not only did the system of law, and the mode of administering it, continue the same, but the general spirit of liberty, which they fostered from their first establishment in the country, though it had been infringed by the absurd policy of the mother-country, was the same; so that nothing was changed besides the executive power. There never had been any nobility in the country, no hereditary power of any kind, nor any general establishment of religion. The governors, who had before been appointed by the king of England, were afterwards chosen by the people; but they exercised the same powers with the preceding governors, and in the same manner.—*Amer. Edit.*

It has been very lately proposed, in the *United States*, to simplify "the system of law."—*Ed.*

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made partially, and for a time, before it be finally established.

An old and complex constitution of government may be compared to a part of the constitution of nature; since those who are the most conversant with it may not fully understand it. As the oldest physician is not always able to prescribe for himself, so the whole legislative body of any country are not to be trusted in their schemes of improvement. How many single laws, passed with universal approbation, are obliged to be repealed, and in a very short time, on account of inconveniencies which the wisest men could not foresee? The operation of particular laws, and much more the influence of a whole system of government, depend upon the principles of human nature, which are as yet but imperfectly understood.

There can be no doubt, however, but that every nation has a right to make whatever changes they please in the constitution of their government, and therefore to displace, and even to punish any governors, who are only their *servants*, for their abuses of power, in whatever manner they may have been appointed. There cannot be a greater absurdity than to suppose that the happiness of a whole nation should be sacrificed to that of any individuals. It only behoves them, as they must necessarily be judges in their own cause, and as they would consult their own future advantage, to proceed with great caution in any attempts to change their mode of government, or to punish their governors. The notion that kings reign by a *divine right*, independently of the designation of the people, and therefore that they are not accountable to them for the exercise of their power, is now universally and deservedly exploded.

Provided states be well constituted, and wisely go-

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verned, it does not seem to be of much importance whether they be of great or small *extent*; but if they be ill constituted, a country divided into small ones will in general be a scene of the greatest misery. As it requires no more hands to direct the affairs of large states than those of small ones, and great bodies of men are not easily put in motion, there is but little room for ambition in great empires. Consequently individuals apply themselves to their own affairs, and consult their own happiness, and never think of taking any part in public measures but on great emergencies, such as may not occur in any one country in several centuries. But when states are small, many more persons are within the influence of ambition, factions are formed, animosity is inflamed, and one party is seldom content, without the destruction or banishment of the other; as is abundantly exemplified in the history of the small states of Greece and Italy. If a great empire be tolerably well governed, private persons have long intervals of peace, it being not so easy for ambitious and interested persons to make a commotion, or a civil war, as in a small state.

If men understood their real interest, and consequently saw it to consist in living on good terms with their neighbours, small states might find no inconvenience even with respect to great undertakings. For where the wealth of one state was not equal to any public work, in which a number was interested, they might all join to defray the expence. But while mankind are disposed to national jealousy and hostility, it is sometimes of consequence to extend the bounds of a state; as for instance that of England over the whole island, including Wales and Scotland; because it brings an increase of strength, and, what is more, cuts off occasions of war.

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In all governments, the largest as well as the smallest, public business, as has been observed, will be done by a few, who have either nominally the power of the state in their hands, or who have gained the confidence of those who have. The real effective persons in the vast empire of Persia, or of Rome, were not more in number than those who transact the same kind of business in Holland or Venice, or even in small towns and corporations; and those who do this business are not always those who are esteemed to be the wisest, or the most upright, but generally the most ambitious and bustling. Intelligent and well-disposed persons will not always give themselves the trouble which stations of public trust necessarily require, and therefore easily give way to those who are willing to take it upon them, and whose interest or ambition pushes them on to do it.

Considering how much *interest* and *ambition* are gratified by directing the affairs of nations, and how much more violently and steadily mankind in general are impelled by these principles than by any other, we cannot be surprised to find hardly any other than men of these characters in places of trust and power; and of the two, *ambition* certainly makes a better statesman than avarice. The views of the former must have a connexion with the good of his country, though it be not his proper object; but the views of the latter may be the very reverse of it. No country, therefore, ought to complain if they have nothing to lay to the charge of their governors besides ambition, or the desire of distinguishing themselves and their families, and establishing a name with distant nations and posterity, provided the rights of individuals be not sacrificed to it.

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LECTURE XLIV.

THERE can be no doubt but that *government* under any of the before-mentioned forms, is infinitely preferable to a state of *barbarism* and *anarchy*. Idleness, treachery, and cruelty, are predominant in all uncivilized countries, notwithstanding the boasts which the poets make of the *golden age* of mankind, before the erection of empires; and their vices and bad habits lose ground in proportion as mankind arrive at settled and regular forms of government. There is no borrowing in barbarous countries, says Montesquieu, but upon pledges; so little influence have ideas of property, and a sense of honour, over uncivilized people. Never were treachery and cruelty more flagrant than in those unsettled times of the Saxon government in England, during the ravages of the Danes, and particularly in the long reign of Ethelred. Whatever vices civilized countries may abound in, there is no man, says Voltaire, who would think his life and property so secure in the hands of a Moor, or a Tartar, as in those of a French or English gentleman.

That mankind have not naturally any high ideas of the *forms of Justice* is evident, says Montesquieu, from many facts in history. Nothing was more insupportable to the Germans than the tribunal of Varus; and Mithridates, haranguing against the Romans, reproached them with the formalities of their law. As to idleness, all uncivilized nations are notorious for it. The barbarous troops which the Romans hired could not without great difficulty be brought to submit to the Roman discipline and fatigue. Till about the time of the Reformation, the Scotch, as they were the most uncivilized, were the most indolent people in

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Europe; and those people that are called the aboriginal Irish are to this day extremely averse to all kinds of labour. Hence it is that in all uncivilized countries, cattle, which propagate of themselves, bear a much lower price than corn, which requires more art, labour, and stock to raise it than such people are possessed of.

We are not, however, to consider all countries as *barbarous*, that are not policied as ours, and other great nations, are. Where there are no regular laws, established *customs* may have the same effect, and be as much respected. And in countries where there is but little property, the inconvenience of this more free mode of life is very slight. As the necessary attendant on having little property is little labour, many persons are particularly pleased with it.

The North American Indians are remarkably fond of their roving way of life, in which, though they occasionally make the greatest exertions, they are not obliged to constant labour. "Nor can we say," says M. Charlevoix, "that this is owing to their not being acquainted with our modes of life. Many Frenchmen have tried their way of life, and were so pleased with it, that several of them, though they could have lived very comfortably in the colonies, could never be prevailed upon to return to them. On the contrary, there never was so much as a single Indian that could be brought to relish our way of living. Children have been taken, and have been brought up with a great deal of care,—nothing had been omitted to hinder them from having any knowledge of their parents; yet the moment they have found themselves at liberty, they have torn their clothes to pieces, and have gone across the woods in quest of their countrymen. An Iroquois was even a lieutenant in our army, yet he returned to his

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own nation, carrying with him only our vices, without correcting any of those which he brought along with him*." The roving life of the Tartars is peculiarly pleasing to them. It is entertaining, says Mr. Bell †, to hear them commiserate those who were confined to one place of abode, and obliged to support themselves by labour.

There can hardly be a more entertaining object to a speculative mind than to mark the *progress of refinement* in the ideas of a people emerging from a state of barbarism, and advancing by degrees to a regular form of government‡. There is, in particular, a natural connexion between government and ideas of property. From the weak and infantine state in which both are originally found, both of them have arrived, by equal degrees of improvement, at the stability and perfection which they enjoy at present.

A knowledge of this subject enables us to account for many facts in ancient history. In ancient times, the property of land was not so valuable a right as it is at present. It was little better than a right of *usufruct*, or a power of using the fruits for the support of the possessor and his family. And as the manner of living in ancient times was much more simple than it is now, the accounts we read of the division of lands by Lycurgus, and other ancient legislators, are more credible than they would appear from judging according to the present ideas of mankind. Timoleon, when he settled the affairs of the Syracusans and Selinuntians, whose country was greatly depopulated, invited over 40,000 men from Greece, and distributed so many lots of land

* *Charlevoix*, ii. 109. † *Travels*, i. 450.

‡ Dr. Gilbert Stuart, who died in 1786, published, *A View of Society in Europe, in its Progress from Rudeness to Refinement.—Ed.*

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among them, to the great satisfaction of the old inhabitants.

Whenever we read of great simplicity in the manner of transmitting landed property, we may pronounce with certainty that the people are not far advanced in the arts of life. A more particular account will be given of the progress of men's ideas and customs, with respect both to this subject and some others, when we come to treat of *laws**. In this account of the state of barbarous nations we must not omit observing, that it is a strong indication of the approach of the Northern nations towards humanity and politeness, that their compensations for injuries done to women were generally double.

The progress and revolutions of government itself, after it is once established, are objects very deserving of the closest attention. No government ever underwent more revolutions than the Roman, and history affords the fairest opportunity of tracing them in all their causes and effects; as has been done in an excellent manner by Montesquieu, in his treatise on the rise and declension of the Romans †.

It is no less entertaining to trace the European monarchies, particularly the English, from their first rudiments in the woods of Germany, to their present state. But history affords little light for this purpose, and therefore learned men have adopted different hypotheses about several particulars relating to it; and party prejudices have made them enter with too much keenness and animosity into a subject which exhibits

* See Lect. XLVII.—*Ed.*

† *Considerations sur les Causes de la Grandeur des Romains, et de leur Decadence.*—Amst. 1746. There have been several editions of the original, and of an English translation.—*Ed.*

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a most agreeable prospect to a philosopher living under those governments.

As an example of the progress of government, I shall trace as briefly as possible all the capital changes in the constitution of the principal European governments, and particularly the English; beginning with their first rude state in their native country, and comprehending the rise, progress, and decline of the *feudal system*, which prevailed wherever those barbarous invaders settled. I shall not stop to prove, or to refute, any particular hypothesis, but proceed without interruption in that account which to me appears the most probable.

Germany was formerly divided into *nations*, and the nations into *pagi**, each of which had its own prince, judge, or general. The power of each of the pagi was lodged in the assembly of all the freemen of the pagus, and the power of the whole nation in the general assembly of that nation.

Every man's own family and slaves were entirely subject to him. All the lands were annually divided among all the freemen, who parcelled them out to their slaves and dependents upon certain conditions, always reserving enough of the yearly produce to maintain their own families in abundance.

Each prince was attended by an indefinite number of freemen volunteers, who were maintained at his expense, and fought with him in battle. The sons also of those who had distinguished themselves by acts of valour had the like attendants. They were called

* Thus Cæsar describes Switzerland, "Omnis civitas Helvetiæ in quatuor pagos divisa est." *De Bell. Gall.* lib. i. c. 10. Again, he says of the Suevi, "Ii centum pagos habere dicuntur." *Ibid.* lib. iv. c. 2. See further, on *pagi*, Bishop Squire's *Historical Essay upon the Anglo-Saxon Government*, 1745, p. 14. Note.—*Ed.*

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companions or *ambacti;* in the southern parts of Gaul, *soldurii;* and afterwards in England, *thanes;* and they lived scattered up and down the country. When they went to war, the troops of every tribe and province fought under the same standard, divided, probably, into thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens; each of which companies had its own commander.

The prince, where there was one, had a larger division of land, and a greater proportion of all fines, which were imposed for all crimes except treason and adultery. His office was for life.

At the general assembly, every freeman had an equal vote. Upon ordinary occasions the pagi might send their leaders, but upon extraordinary occasions every freeman was obliged to be present under the severest penalties. Then peace and war were proclaimed, ambassadors sent, and the common general chosen; and to this assembly all inferior officers were accountable for their behaviour. No person could bear arms for the public till he had been presented here. The princes of each district prepared matters for this assembly, as a standing council of state, and to them all ambassadors, &c. applied. The Druids, who were the only priests and the chief nobility in the country, and who were exempt from all secular incumbrances, and maintained at the common charge, presided in the assembly.

All the freemen served in the army without pay; and the general was not quite absolute, being often restrained by his council, and by his companions.

When a conquest was made, the general and council divided the land into as many parts as there were pagi in the army. These again were divided by their proper chiefs among the several families, according to their rank and esteem. Some suppose that the lands

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of the pagi became *counties*, the share of a thousand a *trything*, the share of one hundred an *hundred*, and that of ten a *tything*; each under its own eoldorman*. But Mr. Millar seems to have proved "that a *tything* was originally the same thing with a *village*, and that it did not comprehend any precise number of persons or families†." This, however, might come to be the case in a course of time, though the original distribution might be according to the number of persons or families.

So long as their conquests were in the least insecure, and consequently they had occasion for the continual exercise of arms, the whole body of the migrating people preserved the idea of the encampment of a large army. The office of general, from being occasional, became of course perpetual; that is, he was a *king*, but elective, as before. Every freeman was ready at the military call, and every grant of lands was upon condition of military service.

Land thus distributed was called *thane-land*, or *boc-land*; the possessors, *thanes*; and every particular inheritance, a *feoh* or *feud*, in Latin *beneficium*.

As long as the most distant view to their native country remained to these Germans, in these foreign settlements, possessions could not regularly descend to a man's heirs, who might not be able to defend them; but by degrees, as valour ceased to be necessary, from the security of their conquests, feuds became hereditary. Then those who held immediately of the king were called *tenants in capite*, and were obliged to attend the king's courts, in the same manner as every person who held land of another attended the court of his immediate superior.

* See Bishop Squire's *Essay*, pp. 100, 101.—*Ed.*

† *Hist. View of the English Government*, book i. ch. 6.—*Ed.*

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When christianity was introduced among these nations, grants of land were made to the church, and the bishops held them as all other tenants did, on condition of military service. But afterwards they held lands in what was called *frankalmoigne*, when only alms to the poor, and prayers, were required of them. Those of the superior clergy who held lands immediately of the king were *tenants in capite*, and obliged, as such, to give attendance in the king's courts.

The greater thanes granted lands out of their division to their immediate friends and followers, in the same manner as they received them, and their beneficiaries were called *vassals*. Of these, however, only some received grants upon condition of military service; others (though these were probably such as had been in a state of servitude) chose to follow husbandry, and were called *sockmen*. These held their lands upon condition of assisting their lord in his ploughing and reaping. But afterwards, instead of the actual service of the plough, they supplied their lord with corn, cattle, and clothes, and lastly with *money*, as an equivalent for them.

The ground which lay nearest the habitation of every freeman was given to the care of his own slaves, who tilled the ground for him. These were called *villeins*, and went with the soil, having no liberty either to leave their masters or quit the place.

All the taxes which the feudal laws obliged vassals to pay to their superiors,—thanes to the king, and their vassals to them,—were upon the three following occasions; when his eldest son was made a knight, when his eldest daughter was married, and to ransom him when he was taken prisoner.

Every lord was supreme judge of his own vassals, and always their general in time of war. When his power

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of judge was abused, all capital cases were referred to a superior jurisdiction, or to such persons as the king sent from time to time to assist the great men in the distribution of justice, and to see that he was not wronged in his share of the fines, which was generally one third.

Lands which were not distributed to the free soldiers, but which were left in the hands of the old inhabitants, or were occupied by new comers, were called *allodial*, or *folk lands*, and the occupiers were governed by the king, who sent a *rive*, or *eoldorman*, (who was always to be a proprietor of boc land,) to preside over them. To him was afterwards added another standing magistrate, called the *heterock*, whose office resembled that of lord-lieutenant in the county; whereas the office of our present *sheriffs* was derived from the other. This *rive*, or *sheriff*, held the *rive mote*, *scyre mote*, or *folk mote*; and thane land is sometimes called *rive land*.

Both the king's vassals, and those of the greater lords, had greater privileges than the possessors of allodial estates. Among others, their lives were rated higher. On this account those persons who possessed allodial estates often chose, for their greater security, to put themselves under the protection of some powerful lord. When this was done universally, the *feudal system* may be said to be fully established; which was not the case in England till the time of William the Conqueror. Then, too, estates first descended entire to the eldest son; whereas before they had been equally divided among all the sons. An equal division did not suit the interest of the great feudatorial lords, who were more effectually and expeditiously served by one powerful vassal, or a few such, than by many weak ones, depending immediately upon themselves.

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In the Saxon times, the landholders of every province met at least twice every year in the scyre mote. In this court causes of religion were first heard, then pleas of the crown, and lastly private causes; and sentence was given by the presidents, who were the earl, the bishop, and the king's deputy.

In the time of Alfred, juries were introduced into the English courts. He also completed the division of the country into counties, tythings, and hundreds, and made other excellent regulations for the more effectual administration of justice *.

The legislative power of the whole community, and also the power of peace and war, was, in the Saxon times, lodged in the assembly of the whole nation, called the *folkmote* or *mycelgemote*, in which every proprietor of land (at least to the amount of five hides) had a power of voting. To this there was a *wittenagemote*, consisting of the king's companions, or thanes, the governors of the several counties, and, after the introduction of christianity, bishops, and others of the superior clergy.

Probably, however, the *mycelgemote* and *wittenagemote* might consist of the same persons; the former being the regular assembly of the whole body at stated times, and the latter, those who usually attended on any particular call; and those would be such as were nearest the king,—persons in whose wisdom and experience the greatest trust was reposed, by himself, and the nation at large.

The change of allodial into feudal estates made a change in the great council of the nation. In the former case the landholders assembled in their own right, in the latter as the dependents on the crown. But the

* See *Biog. Brit.* i. 76, 77, 83, Notes L, M, X.—*Ed.*

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change having been gradual, and those who assembled by different rights probably meeting at the same time and place, it is not particularly noticed by historians.

The mycelgemote, it is said, sometimes altered the succession to the crown. It is certain that the Saxon kings had not the same power that was afterwards acquired by our princes. Their lives were rated no higher than those of any other freeman. The king assembled the mycelgemote upon extraordinary occasions, and ordinarily that assembly met in the spring. The most considerable branch of the royal prerogative was the appointing the chief officers of church and state, as governors of counties, bishops, abbots, &c.

It is also said by some, that, upon particular occasions, there was also a *pananglicum* in the Saxon heptarchy, where commanders in chief of the whole nation were chosen.

LECTURE XLV.

In countries which were perpetually in a state of war, the feudal system acquired strength, and became more analogous to itself in all its parts. Thus, in England, during the Saxon times, we see only the general outlines of it; but in Normandy, about the time of William the Conqueror, it was in its perfection, and in that state it was by him introduced into England. Then, when the interest of the lord was the strongest in his *fief* (except that it was hereditary, and he could not refuse entrance to the proper heir), it could not be alienated without his consent; because it was unreasonable that he should have a vassal who was disagreeable to him obtruded upon him. The heiress could not marry without his consent for the same reason.

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Upon these, and a variety of other occasions, the superior lord (who is generally called *lord paramount*) insisted upon large fines from his vassals, which kept the common people in a state of the most abject dependence upon a few great landholders.

It is not to be wondered, therefore, that no flourishing cities, no extensive commerce, no encouragement for the polite arts, were ever found under governments purely feudal. Indeed, the whole scene of the feudal times was too full of war and confusion to admit of these improvements. The different orders of vassalage gave rise to numberless quarrels and processes, which could only be decided by force of arms.

Every lord in those days, having independent jurisdiction, and his own vassals immediately devoted to him, was in fact a petty sovereign; and a few of these in a country were generally an over-match for the king, and often occasioned the greatest disorders. Perhaps never was there a worse government, or a government in which there was less provision for the security and happiness of the bulk of the people, than in this. Had not religion, or rather superstition, provided an asylum for a few, those times in which the feudal system was at its height, would have been nothing more than perfect anarchy and confusion. Thefts, rapine, murders, and disorders of all kinds, prevailed in every kingdom of Europe to a degree almost incredible, and hardly compatible with the subsistence of civil society. Every offender sheltered himself under some chieftain, who screened him from justice*.

* The power of the great feudal lords arose from the great numbers of persons who were attached to them; and this attachment arose from their being wholly dependent upon them. They were either their tenants, or were kept without labour by their liberality. An ancient baron could

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Many of the most renowned commanders in the time of Edward III. and the following reigns, had been leaders of banditti; and it was usual for princes who could not subdue them to enter into treaties with them, and to be supplied by them with many thousands of men. A great part of the English forces in France were generally of this kind of men. When Edward III. commanded an army of an hundred thousand men in Flanders, they were said to have been chiefly foreigners.

Voltaire says that about the time of Otho, every castle was a capital of a small state of banditti, and every monastery an armed garrison; the harvests were either burned, cut down before the time, or defended sword in hand; the cities were reduced in a manner to deserts, and the country depopulated by frequent and long famines.

A circumstance which kept things tolerably well balanced, with respect to public liberty, and which prevented the power of any one from oppressing the rest, was the number of powers and interests which were perpetually struggling for superiority. The king conducted himself by one set of principles, the barons by another, the clergy by a third, and the commons by a fourth. All their views were incompatible, and each prevailed according as incidents were favourable to it. The clergy in general held a very useful middle place, checking the power of the king, or of the

make no other use of his superfluity. At present an English nobleman may be richer than any ancient baron, being able to command the labour of more persons, by paying them wages; but as these persons are only employed by him occasionally, and they all serve others as well as him, they have no attachment to him in particular. If he did not employ them, they would not starve, and therefore they feel themselves as independent of him as he is of them. In fact, no persons are more independent than those who are willing to labour, and are sure of finding employment.

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barons, according as either of them prevailed too much, and threatened their privileges, and the general liberty of the state; though it was the former only that they were concerned about.

When the feudal system had taken place, and not before; and consequently when (there being no effectual provision to restrain violence) it had been so customary for people to terminate their differences by the sword, and even law-suits had so often terminated in this, which, according to the barbarous notions of those times, was deemed the most honourable way of deciding them, the laws themselves were obliged to adopt that method of decision. It came into England with William the Conqueror, and prevailed for several centuries in all parts of Europe; and it was certainly better to restrain, and subject to the rules of a court, that sword which would have raged, and have committed greater devastation elsewhere.

The civil union in these feudal times being weak, private confederacies were entered into, to supply its place. At length *knight errantry* arose in those days of universal danger. When all travelling was unsafe, and particularly no women could appear abroad without being ravished or murdered, some persons of spirit and humanity, and deeply tinctured with the religion of the times, devoted themselves to the public good, and particularly to the service of defenceless women. This profession soon becoming honourable, numbers engaged in it, which contributed to soften the rigour of the times.

As the most remarkable instances of hospitality are seen in the most inhospitable and barbarous countries, so those times of universal anarchy produced the greatest excesses of heroism; such, indeed, as could only exist in those circumstances. For these flights

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of heroism are useless, and therefore checked, in well regulated governments.

The practice of tilts and tournaments, which gave a dignity to the order of knighthood, and afforded the finest field for the exercise of valour, was introduced from the gallant courts of the Moorish kings in Spain.

So deep rooted was the passion for chivalry, that it infected the writings, conversation, and behaviour of men for some ages; and when the ideas belonging to it vanished, as government grew more perfect, and learning and true taste revived, it left modern gallantry and the point of honour, which still maintain their influence, and are the genuine offspring of those customs. The superstition and valour of the knights errant were of excellent service in the wars of the Holy Land, and against the Saracens in Spain.

We have now advanced to the full growth of the feudal system. Let us from hence mark the several steps by which it declined, and see how order arose out of this chaos and confusion. And here the principal circumstance to be attended to, is the diminution of the power of the aristocratical feudal lords, by the dismembering of their estates, and the more equal distribution of property among the lower orders of the people, with the gradual acquisition of power by the several sovereigns of Europe.

One considerable means of bringing about this great event was the expensive wars which were carried on in those days, particularly the expeditions to the Holy Land, which made the great lords and landholders willing to sell their lands for large sums of ready money; and by degrees they obtained statutes to favour these alienations.

Moreover, when, in consequence of the progress of

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arts, industry, and manufactures, the feudal manners gave way to some degree of luxury, superiors were willing to give lands at very low rents, in consideration of large sums delivered at one payment. These rents became lower and lower, till at last nothing but a simple *acknowledgment* was made for them.

Improvements in the art of war made the whole system of the feudal government, as adapted to military affairs, entirely useless. The hereditary lords were not always found to be the most proper commanders, or their vassals the best disciplined troops. It was therefore easily agreed on both sides to send deputies instead of personal service, and at last to commute for a sum of money. This practice gave rise to *standing armies*, which threw a vast weight of power into the hands of the sovereign, which was before entirely in the hands of the lords. Louis XIV. once in his reign summoned the nobility to appear in arms, according to the feudal system; but the troops they brought were so ignorant of discipline, that the custom was for ever after laid aside in France. By this means tenures by knights service sinking, and, in consequence of the progress of arts and industry, that of villeinage rising; both came gradually to the medium of sockage tenures, which extended themselves continually over landed property in Great Britain.

LECTURE XLVI.

In process of time, societies of artisans, which originally were considered as belonging to the lord of the soil on which they lived, taking advantage of the necessity of the times and their own increasing riches, gained certain privileges and immunities from their

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lords, till at length they became independent of them. These *corporations* are said to have been the invention of Louis le Gros *, to free the people from their slavery to their lords, and to give them protection by a separate jurisdiction †.

Philip le Bel, king of France, was the first who (in 1301) admitted with great policy the inhabitants of cities to have a seat in the states of the kingdom, after the clergy and nobility. His view was to facilitate the jurisdiction which he wanted to establish over those cities, and to engage them to consent to the imposition of a tax for carrying on his wars in Flanders, and for opposing the ambitious views of Boniface VIII. Accordingly, sir James Stewart says ‡, the people began to pay willingly, when they found they had a vote in what concerned them.

In England these corporations grew to great consideration; and many of them coming to hold lands of the king by a tenure called *burgage*, became of course *tenants in capite*, and, as such, were summoned to appear by their deputies at the great council of the nation, along with the representatives of the lesser barons; that is, those persons who had purchased parts of baronies, but were not able to bear the expence of attending the king's courts. The greater barons were persons of ancient families, who kept their original fiefs in a great measure undivided. The titles which these greater barons obtained, as of dukes, earls, viscounts, and marquisses, were introduced by

* Or rather, according to *Henault*, (A.D. 1135,) "des quatre frères Garlande et de l'abbé Suger, ses principaux ministres." *Abrégé Chronol.* 1789. i. 179.—*Ed.*

† "Soit par l'établissement des communes, soit par l'affranchissement des serfs, soit en diminuant la trop grande autorité des justices seigneuriales." *Ibid.*—*Ed.*

‡ *Political Œconomy*, vol. ii. p. 355.

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degrees, and were all originally official and territorial, though afterwards they became personal, and, like the feuds, hereditary; even the term *baron* itself came at length to be merely honorary.

In the struggle between the crown and the barons, the constitutional rights of the commons seem to have received a temporary interruption; their assembling in parliament being less frequent and less effectual, and at length altogether suspended. Under our kings John and Henry III. their privileges were revived, and the 49th of Henry III. and the 23rd of Edward I., which have been considered as æras of the establishment of the commons, Dr. Gilbert Stuart says *, were only memorial epochas in their history.

It was among the corporations above mentioned that social and civil connexions first extended themselves in the feudal times. The people who were members of these communities, being most remote from a military life and military notions, first found the advantage of a more extensive power over their property than the feudal customs admitted. It was consequently with them that alienation of property, both in lands and goods, in all its varieties and forms, both during the life and after the death of the proprietor, first took place; and other laws adapted to a more perfect state of society were first enacted for their use, long before the rest of the nation had the benefit of them; though, at length, after their example, they prevailed universally. But through the whole state, the interest of the superior lord in the fief grew gradually less and less. For whereas, at first, fiefs reverted to their lord after the death of the proprietor, then, after that of his son, and then of his grandson;

* *Essay on the Constitution of England*, p. 11.

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by practice, without public ordinance, it crept into the law of all nations, that in all fiefs a man's collateral relations, as well as his direct descendants, *ad infinitum*, should succeed him; and, though the progress of *alienation* was sometimes checked by laws relating to *entails*, yet methods were still found out, and connived at, to elude those statutes; and every attempt to prevent the progress of the free alienation of landed property was striving against the torrent.

In this train things continued for several centuries, till towards the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th, almost all the princes in Europe, as if by consent, attacked the power of the nobles. Louis XI. of France added to the crown what he wrested from the lords, but Henry VII. threw it into the hands of the commons of England.

Some of the means which Henry used were passing an act which allowed lords to sell or mortgage their lands, without paying any fines for alienation, and the restraining them from keeping a great number of idle retainers about them, who were men living at their expence, entirely devoted to them, and ready to engage in all their quarrels.

But little of the merit of these laws is due to him. He meant only to lessen the exorbitant power of the barons, which was formidable to the crown: and the circumstances of the times were quite ripe for every alteration which he made for that purpose. The barons themselves wanted to dispose of their lands for money, to enable them to live with more elegance and to enjoy more of the conveniences of life, which were then first introduced; and their idle retainers were become a burthen to them, while the country stood in great need of their labour when agriculture began to be attended to.

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The benefit of these statutes was not sensibly perceived in England till the reign of queen Elizabeth, though the commons had availed themselves greatly of the sale of those lands which had belonged to the monasteries in the preceding reign. But it was in the reign of Elizabeth that the commons first ventured to approach the throne of their own motion, and give advice to the crown. Unhappily, the attempts of our princes to oppress this rising power occasioned such a struggle between them and the people as ended in a temporary anarchy. At the Restoration, king Charles was induced to remit some of his feudal claims, but the constitution was not settled; and perhaps it never would have been done effectually, had not the bigotry of James II. engaged him in the fruitless attempt to subvert the religion and liberty of his country. This happily ended in his abdication, and the settlement of the crown on the more distant branches of the family upon new and surer principles, as was taken notice of before.

The feudal system did not, however, decline equally fast in all parts of Europe. It generally lost ground in time of peace, and sometimes rather gained in time of war; though in some cases the sovereigns, pressed by the necessity of foreign wars, were induced, in consideration of present supplies, to grant important privileges to the people, and particularly to the boroughs. These necessities of the princes were the occasion of many equitable laws and popular concessions.

The feudal system did not decline so fast in Scotland as in England, nor, while it was a separate kingdom, did their commons ever acquire the same power. The reasons of this were, that the Scots had little commerce, industry and arts. All their members met in the same house, and the king's vassals were not increased

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upon the dismembering a royal fief, as was the custom in England. Besides, none could vote but those who had much more fortune than was required in England; and the election of representatives was in the common council, and not in the whole body of the burgesses. Heritable jurisdictions were not entirely abolished in Scotland till the end of the last rebellion.

There are considerable remains of the feudal system at this day in Europe. In Germany it subsists, in many respects, as much as ever. The husbandmen of Poland are confined to the glebe; as they are also in Bohemia, in Suabia, and in other parts of Germany; and even in France, in some provinces remote from the capital, we see, says Voltaire, some remains of this slavery. There are some chapters and monks who claim a right to all the goods of the deceased peasants; and the barbarous right of *aubaine*, by which a stranger beholds his father's estate go to the king's treasury, still subsists in some christian states, unless where it is otherwise provided for by private conventions.

The most visible traces of this system in England are in the forms of law. The feudal law carried with it a system of private rights, which swallowed up all others wherever it came, and involved likewise, in giving effect to these rights, a system of *forms*, which remain even when the original rights are no more.

What is particularly worthy of our notice, with respect to the feudal system, is that a form of government so uniform in its principles should have branched out, as it were, under different circumstances, into other forms so totally different from one another as are the constitutions of the several European states; which were almost all originally equally feudal, and therefore necessarily similar to one another.

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That the kings of Arragon were originally little more than members of an equal aristocracy, is evident from the very form of their inauguration, which was this: "We," (viz. the lords) "who are equal to yourself, do constitute you our king, on condition that you maintain our privileges." The French government, it is certain, differed in nothing material from the English during the whole period of our ancient wars with that nation; and their *assembly of the states*, as it was called, had as much power as our *parliament*. The last assembly of this kind in France was held so late as the year 1614*. On the other hand, the Polish lords have rather gained than lost any power; and in that country, were it not that neighbouring nations are more improved, and that the progress of science has softened the manners and customs of all the nations of Europe, we should see all the misery and distraction of the feudal times. Still they often fight over their deliberations; and the election of a king frequently occasions both civil and foreign wars†.

But what is most of all remarkable with respect to the feudal system is, that a form of government so ill calculated to secure the most valuable ends of society—a constitution so totally inconsistent with security and liberty, and so unfriendly to commerce and science—should, in several instances, have terminated, by the natural course of things, in governments in which men enjoy the greatest security, together with all desirable liberty; and where the utmost scope is given to the genius of man in the extension of arts, manufactures, commerce, and science.

* Before that which was called by the late king of France, which led to a revolution in that country.—*Amer. Edit.*

† This was written before the partition of that country by Russia, Prussia, and Austria.—*Amer. Edit.*

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This lecture was composed before the late great revolution in France, in which an end was put to all traces of the feudal system in that country, except the hereditary succession of the sovereign. In France no other office, or title, descends to a man's posterity; and unless wisdom and ability of other kinds could descend with them, there is no natural reason why they should. The example of America, joined to that of France, will demonstrate the inconvenience of the feudal system in all its parts; and the frequent wars and the enormous expences of these governments, with the obstruction they give to commerce and personal exertion in a variety of respects, will certainly make all nations weary of them. In the mean time, it becomes all hereditary princes and nobles to act with the greatest moderation, that the decline of their power may be less rapid, and the revolution that must take place may be the easiest to themselves and the country in general.

LECTURE XLVII.

In considering what contributes to the happiness of a society at home, the subject of *laws* ought principally to be attended to by an historian; as being certainly next, in point of importance, to the form and constitution of government, which may be said to comprise the greater laws of the state.

The great difference between a country governed by *laws*, and one governed by *men*, is that in the former every man knows what he has to expect. *Laws* bear a fixed and definite sense, so that all men are punished or rewarded alike in the same circumstances; but *men*

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are subject to caprice, so that it cannot be known beforehand how the same judge will be disposed to decide; and much less will one man's conduct be a rule for that of another.

A multiplicity of laws is a certain attendant upon an improved state of society. For the more multiplied and intimate are the connexions of men with one another, the more laws are necessary to regulate their mutual transactions. When men's interests frequently interfere, disputes must frequently happen; and if the subjects of the disputes be various, the laws which are introduced to adjust them must be various too. Nor is there any method of obviating this, but the arbitrary and speedy decision of all differences by despotic power, as in Persia and other parts of Asia, where justice has ever been administered in the most expeditious manner. But this, as was shown before, is a very unhappy and imperfect state of society. It is a famous observation of Montesquieu, that the tediousness and expence of law-suits are the price of liberty. He adds, that whenever any person makes himself absolute, he begins to simplify the laws.

It is possible, however, that this price of liberty itself may be too dear; for when law-suits are very expensive, they are ineffectual. In that case differences must be decided at random, men being not able to know what the law is; or both parties may be ruined while they are examining it: and what is this better than a society without law, or a state of perfect anarchy?

It is hardly necessary to observe, that the laws of every country should be free from the least contradiction or uncertainty, and that both the practice and the theory of them should be uniform. The use of laws

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depends so much upon the uniformity of them, in order that justice be administered to all persons alike, that it is highly convenient that the same forms be kept up as much as possible in all courts of justice. Lord Kaimes has largely demonstrated the inconvenience attending the introduction of some parts of the civil law into the old feudal law of Scotland; whereas the English are remarkably tenacious of their customs, and have preserved their forms entire, with little or no variation, from the earliest times.

This is certainly, upon the whole, very laudable; yet there seems to be an absurdity in the theory, how useful soever the general rule may be in practice, to adhere to ancient forms, when the very ideas and maxims of law on which they were founded are vanished.

There are many signal instances of this in the English law. Thus in England, land, generally speaking, is absolutely under the power of the proprietor; and yet the ancient practice still subsists, which confines the execution to one half, precisely as in the early feudal times, when the debtor could dispose of no more than half his land. Means, however, have been contrived (indirect, indeed) to supply this palpable defect. Any other creditor is authorised to seize another half of the land left out of the first execution, and so on without end. But the worst consequences of these practices are, that by thus strictly adhering to the form without regarding the substance, law, instead of a rational science, becomes a heap of subterfuges, which tend insensibly to corrupt the morals of those persons who make it their profession.

I shall conclude this subject of laws with just observing, that *custom* has in all countries the force of

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law; and indeed it is custom that gives to all laws their greatest force. An attempt to change a mere custom, though in fact an inconvenient one, and at least a very insignificant one, has frequently met with the greatest opposition. There was nothing in all the alterations which Peter the Great made in the constitution of Russia more disliked, and which met with more violent and general opposition, than his orders to all the people who came to town, to cut off their beards and wear short garments.

After these observations concerning laws in general, I shall recite the more important maxims of *criminal law* in particular, as a most important object of attention in studying the constitution and police of different countries.

The object of criminal law is to lessen the number of crimes in future, and thereby to give every man a sense of his personal security; and if this could be done without the actual punishment of any criminal, so much evil would be prevented as his punishment implies. Consequently, punishment has no reference to the degree of moral turpitude in the criminal. It has been justly observed, that, properly speaking, a man is not hanged for stealing a sheep in this country, but that by the terror of his punishment sheep may not be stolen; and that, without any anxiety, persons may leave their sheep in the fields unguarded *.

Crimes committed by violence, and also by night, ought to be punished with more severity than those committed by stealth, or in the day; because the apprehension of the former subjects men to greater dread,

* See Paley's *Mor. Phil.* book vi. ch. 9, 1819, p. 408.—*Ed.*

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and their greater vigilance avails them but little; whereas in cases in which their own care can secure them from injury, the state has less occasion to interfere.

Very strict notions of liberty may be unfavourable to a great degree of security. It is, no doubt, a capital advantage to this country, that our lives, our liberties, and our property, are not at the mercy of *men*, and that we cannot be deprived of them but by *express law*, rigorously construed. But this circumstance makes the proof of a crime so difficult, that many criminals escape for one who suffers the punishment which the laws inflict. In this case, the chance of impunity being so very great, there is too much encouragement to crimes. It is commonly said with us, that it is better that a hundred criminals should escape, than that one innocent person should suffer. But what the innocent daily suffer by the hundred criminals who escape should be taken into the account, as well as the chance of an innocent man suffering as a criminal. In this case he ought to consider his life as sacrificed to the security of the rest of his countrymen*. However, the chance of losing truly upright and worthy characters by severity in the administration of justice is very little. With us some, no doubt, do suffer for crimes which they did not commit; but they are generally such as have committed other crimes, and who, on that account, have no character to make their innocence probable.

In order to prevent the commission of crimes, punishments, at the same time that they ought to be adequate to the offences, should be such as inspire

* See *Paley*, book v. ch. 9, *ad fin.*—*Ed.*

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the greatest *terror*; so that if slavery be more dreadful than present death, as it is to many, the lives of criminals should be spared, and they should be confined to hard labour, either at home, or abroad. In this case some advantage might be derived from them, in compensation for the injury they may have done to society. In this country, however, there would be great danger of criminals escaping from their confinement to labour; and the loss to society by the destruction of criminals is soon made up by the production of better subjects*. How few die by the hand of the executioner, compared with those who die in consequence of war. Is there, then, any mercy in sparing criminals, when the lives of soldiers are in a manner sported with? The only inconvenience from severe punishment is, lest criminals, having no hope of escaping if they should be apprehended, should be guilty of greater violences in order to prevent detection.

In order to inspire terror, it is of particular consequence that punishment should immediately follow conviction, which was the case with all the ancient nations. Thus, our Saviour, after being condemned, was immediately led to execution. Our mode of respiting, for the sake of benefiting the souls of the criminals, has arisen from a notion, that such repentance as that of a condemned criminal may be of some avail to him with respect to his future state; a notion false

* It is much to be regretted that such a christian philosopher and philanthropist as Dr. Priestley had not more maturely considered this subject. He would, probably, then have been more inclined to recommend the reformation than the destruction of criminals, to which he seems, here, too easily reconciled. See *Selection of Opinions of different Authors upon the Punishment of Death*, by Basil Montague 8vo, 3 vols. 1809 to 1813.—*Ed.*

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and dangerous in the extreme, as it encourages the whole community to persist in evil courses, thinking that a few days, or hours, of repentance, may cancel all their guilt, and prepare them for future happiness.

A wise and prudent legislature will endeavour to *prevent* the commission of crimes, as well as to see to the punishment of them when they are committed. For this purpose, it is of great consequence that every incentive to profligacy and vice be removed as far as possible. The prospect of improving men's fortunes by *lotteries* diverts them from the true pursuit of honest gain, and is the cause of making great numbers desperate *. A multitude of *alehouses*, and other places of entertainment, which tempt men to spend their money, when their families are in want of it, is another great nuisance in this country. And the long confinement of criminals together, and in some cases of debtors and criminals promiscuously, with every means which they can command of riot and debauch, while they are in prison, makes it a perfect school of vice. They teach and harden one another; and as nine out of ten escape execution, they come into the world better taught in the arts of villany than before. Common sense, one would think, should have taught us long ago what the excellent Mr. Howard has taken so much pains to inculcate; viz. that every criminal should be confined *alone*, and be limited to the bare necessaries of life. Perfect solitude gives room for reflection, and will often reclaim when nothing else would do it†.

Great severity, as well as great lenity, ought to be

* The practice of raising part of the annual revenue by the profit on a lottery is just now (1825) abandoned by the British government.—*Ed.*

† This, however, should never be in the dark, without the opportunity of reading proper books, or some means of amusement. Otherwise, so-

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avoided in the sanctions of laws. The severity of laws hinders the execution of them. Persons of humanity would rather let a criminal escape than see him suffer more than they think he deserves. When punishment bears no proportion to the nature of the crime, men are punished under the idea of their being more wicked than they really are, which is contrary to the spirit of a moderate government. Besides, when punishments are very severe, there can be little room for a difference in the animadversions upon offences. Hence persons who are once criminal in any degree have nothing left to restrain them from greater excesses. Thus in countries where the punishments of robbery and murder are the same, robbers always commit murder. This inconvenience must happen unless, as it is often the case, and particularly in England, the gentleness of the administration softens the rigour of the law*. But this evidently tends to introduce the most lawless proceedings. When the *Voconian* law† at Rome appeared too harsh, every prætor decided ac-

litary confinement would, with many, terminate in insanity. Great attention should by all means be given to the characters and peculiar circumstances of criminals in this case—*Amer. Edit.*

The eminently benevolent Jonas Hanway published, in 1781, in the form of letters, a volume entitled "*Distributive Justice and Mercy*: showing, that a temporary real solitary imprisonment of convicts, supported by religious instruction and well-regulated labour, is essential to their well-being, and the safety, honour, and reputation of the people."

The worthy design of this publication was to promote "the *consideration*, how we may all live in comfort, and correct our fellow-subjects, instead of *destroying* them," and thus "execute an important enterprise in the fields of civil government;" in comparison of which the soberminded author is disposed lightly to esteem the most "memorable feats in arms." —*Ed.*

* Thus, according to the account given by sir S. T. Janssen, of 190 sessions at the Old Bailey, in 23 years, from 1749 to 1771 inclusive, there were sentenced to death 1121, actually executed 678. See *Hanway*, pp. 11, 12.—*Ed.*

† Proposed (A. U. C. 579) by the tribune Q. Voconius Saxa, and promoted by Cato the Censor. It forbad "the citizens of Rome to

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cording to his own ideas of equity; that is, without law. Of all governments the *Japanese* is the most severe. In Japan the whole district is punished where the crime was committed; and thus *Alfred* was obliged to enact with respect to England*.

So rigorous were the forest laws in France, that, as the writer of the life of M. Turgot informs us, a peasant being accused of killing a wild boar, alleged in his excuse that he took it to be a man. But as excessive severity in laws is apt to beget relaxation in their execution, so, on the other hand, their excessive lenity, besides giving too much indulgence, and consequently encouragement to offenders, is often the cause of lawless cruelty and barbarity. Where there are no legal methods of putting persons to death, as in the case of Sylla, men will have recourse to illegal ones to get rid of their enemies, as he did by proscription.

It seems at first sight that it would be better to define every crime, and to fix every punishment with the greatest precision, in order that every man may know with certainty what will be the consequence of his conviction. But since no crimes can be defined with such precision, but that the degrees both of guilt, and of danger to the community, will be very different in crimes of the same denomination, some think it more convenient, in countries governed by strict law, to appoint heavy punishments for small offences, with a power of pardon, or of mitigating the punishment

institute any woman whatsoever universal legatee, and determined the sum they might receive in succession." *Roman Annals* (1760), p. 267.—*Ed.*

* To the extent that "if any one of the *tything* was suspected of an offence, if the headboroughs, or chiefs of the tything, would not be security for him, he was imprisoned; and if he made his escape, the tything and hundred were fined to the king." See *Biog. Brit.* vol. i. p. 77, Note M. —*Ed.*

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in ordinary cases, and of executing the sentence of the law in cases of a more atrocious nature. This at least is the practice in England.

One reason why robbers seldom commit murder in England, is that no mercy is expected in this case. But another is thought to be the horror which people of this country have for dead bodies, which is supposed to be owing to their very seldom seeing them; whereas the Italians are said to be less shocked at this sight, because it is the custom of the country to carry their dead to the grave with their faces uncovered *.

Neither crimes nor punishments should be estimated by *money*, but rather, if it be possible, by *commodities*, unless the nominal sum be frequently changed. Otherwise great inconveniences will follow. Thus in England a man is liable to be hanged, according to the letter of the law, if he steal any thing above the value of ten-pence. A fellow at Rome is said to have given a box on the ear to all he met, giving them a small piece of money, according to the law of the twelve tables.

Shame is no punishment except upon persons of ingenuous dispositions; and if it extinguish a sense of shame, as it tends to do, a man is thereby made desperate; at least he has one important restraint from the commission of crimes taken from him. There are few cases, therefore, in which it is wise to have recourse to it.

It has been a fault in some governments to make some things the object of law of which cognizance cannot be taken, for want of proper evidence. Thus the Persians absurdly made ingratitude a crime to which

* This was practised at Paris, in 1603, in the case of the famous *Charron*. His biographer (1606) says, "Le jour de ses obseques il eut le visage descouvert, et fut revestu d'habits sacerdotaux," &c.—*Ed.*

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a punishment was annexed; whereas nothing of the nature of *manners* ought to be comprised in a code of civil laws.

Still more absurd is it to introduce such principles into the administration of justice among imperfect men as are only adapted to the all-perfect government of God. Thus the tribunal of *inquisition* is founded upon the idea of repentance, as a religious act. Consequently, no person has any chance of being absolved unless he confess, and be his own accuser: and he who denies a crime of which the inquisitors think him guilty, is always condemned. The Spaniards hardly acted more absurdly than this when they condemned, and executed, the Inca *Athualpa*, for having had several wives, which was not contrary to the Peruvian laws, and for killing some of his subjects.

As laws should not contradict themselves, so neither ought they to have any tendency to lessen the obligation of moral duties. They ought rather to enforce them. "Thus it was fundamentally wrong," says Montesquieu, "in Gondebald king of the Burgundians to order that the wife, or son, of a thief should be made slaves if they did not reveal the theft."

Nothing depending upon a man's self should be admitted as an excuse for a crime; not drunkenness, for instance, though madness ought. The North American Indians, however, think differently. "Should an Indian," says M. Charlevoix*, "kill another in his cabin, being drunk, which they often pretend to be when they harbour any such design, they content themselves with bewailing the dead. It was a great misfortune, say they, but as for the murderer, he knew not what he did."

* Vol. ii. p. 39.

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If a murder be committed "in cold blood" among the North American Indians, "it belongs to those of his own cabin," says M. Charlevoix *, "to punish him. These have power to punish him with death. But this they rarely do, and even then without any form of justice; so that his death does not so much look like a legal punishment, as the revenge of some individual; and sometimes a chief is glad of this opportunity to get rid of a bad subject. In a word, crimes are punished in such a manner as neither to satisfy justice, nor establish the public tranquillity and security."

All trials should be as *public* as possible, that the sense of the country may be a check upon the proceedings of the court.

The good or bad use which is made of laws depends very much on the persons who are the *prosecutors*, and those who administer them. In Rome there was no *calumniator publicus*, no *advocate* or *attorney general*; every person was allowed to prosecute for crimes which had a public bad tendency. "This," says Montesquieu, "was a faulty institution, because such a privilege given to individuals could not but be frequently made the instrument of venting private ill-will and revenge." In modern governments, the privilege of prosecuting public crimes belongs to the chief magistrate. In England, no criminal trial, in the name of the crown, can proceed till the case has first been examined by the grand jury of the county, and their authority interposed for the prosecution.

"In Turkey," says lady Wortley Montague †, "murder is never pursued by the king's officers, as with us. It is the business of the next relations to revenge

* Vol. ii. p. 32. † *Letters*, iii. p. 34.

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the dead person; and if they choose rather to compound the matter for money, there is no more said of it."

It is of the greatest consequence that the *judges* be persons who have no interest in the event of the prosecution. They ought therefore, if possible, to have no part either in the legislative or executive power of a state, or any prospect of arriving at greater preferment; and they should also be chosen out of the body of the people. We see the admirable wisdom of the English constitution, both in the appointment of juries, and the situation of the judges. "Claudius," says Tacitus, "by judging himself in all affairs, gave occasion to all kinds of injustice; and Nero when he began his reign, to ingratiate himself with the people, promised to have no concern in it". Louis XIV. often decided the causes of his subjects, and so did all the ancient feudal princes. In England, Edward III. was the last of our kings who presided in a court of justice.

Much of the effect of criminal law depends upon the rules of *evidence*, which are very different in different countries. In England we require the strictest evidence, and it must in all cases be given in open court, and in the presence of the accused. With us, also, *probabilities* are little regarded. But it is not so in some other countries. "The parliament of Thoulouse," says the author of the *Commentaries on Crimes and Punishments**, "hath a very singular custom relative to the validity of evidence. In other places *demi proofs* are admitted, but at Thoulouse they admit of quarters and eighths of a proof. For instance, an hear-say may be considered as a quarter; and another hear-say, more vague than the former, as an eighth: so that eight hear-says, which in fact are no other than

* Annexed to Beccaria's *Essay*, 1785. p. lxxvi.—*Ed.*

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the echo of a groundless report, constitute a full proof. On this principle it was that poor Calas was condemned to the *wheel.*"

A criminal action may be ascertained either by the positive *testimony* of persons who saw it committed, or by other *circumstances;* and in general the former is much preferred: but it is upon the supposition that the witnesses will not be deceived themselves, or contribute to deceive others: and as there are many cases in which one or both of these may be supposed, such testimony comes under the description of a *circumstance,* by which we are enabled to judge whether the fact took place or not: and there are many cases in which it may have less weight than other circumstances.

In no country do more crimes go unpunished than in Italy, chiefly on account of their *sanctuaries,* and also on account of their custom of confining the witnesses along with the criminals. "The most atrocious parricides," says Mr. Sharp,* "are seldom punished at Naples. If a murderer touch a church wall (and many walls are church walls in this city) before he is seized by the officers, holy church will not suffer him to be hanged; and if one man stabs another in the sight of ten witnesses, they all decamp, and leave the coast clear to the assassin."

One method of compelling persons to give a true evidence is *torture;* and in some cases, no doubt, it will succeed; but in many more a man may be made to say any thing to relieve himself from extreme pain. The only proper use of torture is that of punishment for atrocious crimes; and it would certainly strike more terror, which is the end of all punishment, if in

* *Travels* p. 136.

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certain cases recourse was had to it. It has been suggested that there would be no impropriety in condemning murderers to be thrown to wild beasts.

One of the most absurd methods of ascertaining the justice of a cause in the feudal times was that of *fighting*, either in person or by champions. This was called *wager of battle*, or *trial by God*, of which our criminals have nominally the option, it having been imagined that Divine Providence would favour the righteous cause *.

Something similar to the wager of battle was practised by christians, and termed the *judgment of the cross*. "In the year 775 a contest arose between the bishop of Paris, and the abbot of St. Denys, concerning the property of a small abbey. Each of them exhibited deeds and records. Instead of trying the authenticity, or considering the import, of these, the point was referred to the *judicium crucis*. Each produced a person, who, during the celebration of mass, stood before the cross with his arms expanded; and he whose representative first became weary, and altered his posture, lost the cause." The abbot gained it †.

As no person should be considered as guilty till he is proved to be so, no person should be deprived of liberty, or confined, except the crime of which he is accused would be punished more severely than by banishment and confiscation of goods. Because in this case, if he was guilty, it would be in his power to escape punishment. The reason for imprisoning an accused person is only to secure his appearance to take his trial; and he ought to be indemnified for his

* The law permitting a *wager of battle* was repealed a few years since. —*Ed.*

† Mabillon *De Re Diplomat.* lib. vi. 498; in Robertson's *Charles V.* 1777, vol. i. p. 348.—*Ed.*

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confinement, either by the prosecutor or the country, if it appear that he was innocent.

If an innocent man be charged with a crime, it is reasonable that he should have some compensation, and in England an action lies for false imprisonment. In France, on the contrary, an innocent person, who has had the misfortune to be thrown into a dungeon, and tortured almost to death *, has no consolation, no advantage to hope for, no action against any one; and to add to his misfortune, he has for ever lost his reputation, because his joints have been dislocated, a circumstance which ought to have entitled him to compassion †.

LECTURE XLVIII.

THE theory of the *progress of laws* is a fine subject of speculation for a philosopher and metaphysician, demonstrating how men's ideas enlarge and grow refined, in proportion to the improvements of society. As a specimen of this, I shall select the *progress of the criminal laws*, and of the *laws relating to property*, abridged from the ingenious *Law Tracts* of Lord Kaimes.

The necessity of applying to a judge where any doubt arose about the author of a crime was probably, in all countries, the first instance of the legislature's interposing in matters of punishment. In the next place, the injured person was not to punish at pleasure. In Abyssinia it was only when a person was adjudged to die that he was put into the power of the injured.

Pecuniary compositions were probably first established by common consent. It was next made unlawful to prosecute resentments, without first de-

* See Voltaire's *Prix de la Justice*, art xxiv. *De la Torture.—Ed.*
† Beccaria *On Crimes and Punishment*, p. 73.

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manding satisfaction from the delinquent; and the last step was to compel the delinquent to pay, and the injured to accept of, a proper satisfaction.

When compositions first came into use, it is probable they were authorised in slight delinquencies only; and he only who was injured had a right to the composition. But if a man was killed, any one of his relations was entitled to a share, because they were all sufferers by his death; and in all atrocious crimes it was soon perceived that the *public* was injured. A fine must therefore be paid to the public treasury, over and above what the persons injured had a right to claim. The magistrate, having thus acquired such influence, even in private punishments, proceeded naturally to assume the privilege of avenging wrongs done to the public merely, when no individual was hurt. In this manner was the power of punishing crimes against the state established in the civil magistrate.

Compositions established in days of poverty bore no proportion to crimes after nations became rich. Here, then, was a fair opportunity for the king, or chief magistrate, to interpose, and decree an adequate punishment. The first instance of this kind, it is probable, had the consent of the persons injured; and it could not be difficult to persuade any man of spirit, that it was more for his honour to see his enemy condignly punished, than put up with a trifling compensation in money. And then, if a punishment was inflicted adequate to the crime, there could be no claim for a composition. And thus, though indirectly, an entire end was put to the right of private punishment in all matters of importance. Theft probably afforded the first instance of this kind of punishment. The option of inflicting capital punishments, or leaving the criminal to common law, was imperceptibly con-

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verted into an arbitrary power of pardoning, even after sentence; but then the person injured had a right to the composition.

The *trial by battle*, introduced by Dagobert, king of Burgundy, being more agreeable to the genius of a warlike people, was retained much longer than the use of *fire and water*, another artificial means of discovering truth. They were both considered as an appeal to the Almighty.

The *oath of purgation* was substituted in the place of battle, the defendant bringing along with him into the court certain persons called *compurgators*, who, after he had sworn to his own innocence, all swore that his oath was true. This gave the defendant the choice of a *wager by battle*, or a *wager by law*, as the compurgation was called.

Lastly, the oath of compurgation gave place to *juries*. The transition was easy, there being no variation in the custom, except that the twelve compurgators, formerly named by the defendant, were now named by the judge. The oath of purgation and juries were in use at the same time, but the two methods could not long subsist together.

I now proceed to mark the several steps in the progress of men's ideas concerning *property*.

In the original conceptions of mankind concerning property, *possession* was an essential circumstance. It was however a rule that though property is lost by theft, it is not acquired by theft.

Of all the subjects of property, *land* is that which engages our affections the most; and for this reason the relation of property respecting land grew up much sooner to its present firmness and stability than the relation of property respecting moveables. But moveable property led the way in the power of *alienating*.

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In order to take possession of land, some overt act, which was conceived to represent possession, was necessary, and this was termed *symbolical possession.*

Property originally limited, bestowing no power of alienation, carries the mind naturally to the chain of possessors, who continue the occupant's possession after his death, and who must succeed if he cannot alienate.

Donations were of slower growth, being at first small, and on plausible pretexts. It then grew to be a law that the father, without the consent of his heirs, might give part of his land to religious uses, in marriage with his daughter, or in recompense for services.

Donations *inter vivos* paved the way for donations *mortis causâ.* The power of *testing* was first introduced by Solon, who gave power to every proprietor who had no children to regulate his succession by testament.

When a man died without children, his land, originally, fell back to the common. By degrees, the idea of property began to subsist after death; and the person who derived right from the deceased might claim. This right was, probably, first communicated to the children *foris familiæ*, especially if all the children were in that situation. Children failing, the estate went to a brother, and so gradually to more distant collateral relations.

The succession of collaterals failing, descendants produced a new legal idea; for as they had no pretext of right, independent of the former proprietor, their privilege of succeeding could stand on no other ground than the presumed will of the deceased. But the privilege of descendants being gradually restrained within narrower and narrower bounds, was confounded in the hope of succession with collaterals.

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A man who has amassed great wealth cannot think of quitting his hold. To colour the dismal prospect, he makes a deed arresting fleeting property, securing his estate to himself, and to those who represent him, in an endless train of succession. His estate and his heirs must for ever bear his name, every thing being contrived to perpetuate his dignity and his wealth. This gave rise to *entails*. Entails in England, favoured by the feudal system, and authorised by statutes, spread every where with great rapidity, till, becoming a public nuisance, they were checked and defeated by the authority of the judges, without a statute. That entails are subversive of commerce and industry is not the worst that can justly be said of them. They are a snare to the thoughtless proprietor, who, by a single act, may be entangled past hope of recovery. To the cautious again, they are a perpetual cause of discontent, by subverting that liberty and independence to which all men aspire, with respect to their possessions as well as their persons.

The history of laws, in their progress from state to state, is well worthy of the attention of an historian. Some of the most important changes in human affairs are owing to facts necessarily connected with this subject. No event tended to improve the western part of the world more than the accidental finding of a copy of Justinian's *Pandects* in 1130 at Amalphi in Italy.

Many things in the present state of any law are unintelligible without the knowledge of the history and progress of it. Thus it may well puzzle a person to account for the late English practice of crushing a person to death who will not plead. But the reason is, that the English adhered to the original notion, that a process of law implies a *judicial contract*, and

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that there can be no process unless the defendant submit to have his cause tried. Formerly it was actually at their option to accept of the *wager of combat*, or *wager of law*, as it was called. In many parts of Europe, no person can be executed till he has confessed his crime. In this case they have recourse to torture.

The *profession of law* has always been reckoned honourable in civilized countries. All the youth of distinction at Rome studied the law, and the pleading of causes was the constant and well-known road to popularity and preferment; though perhaps a regard for *eloquence*, as much as for law, might be the reason of it. Barbarous nations have ever entertained an aversion to forms of law; and it is certainly an argument of the barbarity of these northern nations, that the profession of law was so long regarded as a mean employment. France is the only country in Europe where the ancient nobility have often put on the long robe.

LECTURE XLIX.

SUPPOSING the things which have the greatest influence on human affairs, viz. *government* and *laws*, to be properly adjusted, the only stable foundation of most of the improvements in social life is *agriculture*, considered as including the cultivation of all the productions of the earth. It is therefore a subject that deserves very particular attention. I even consider the breeding of cattle as a part of this subject, because that employment (except when it is followed by people who frequently shift their habitations, as the wandering Tartars) necessarily implies the cultivation of grass, if not of other vegetables.

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From the earth it is, ultimately, that all animal life is maintained; and from the earth we fetch all the materials for those manufactures and arts which improve and embellish human life; so that were agriculture, in this extensive sense, not attended to, those manufactures and conveniences could not exist. At least the continuance of them would be very precarious, as they must then be brought from other countries. And if the produce of the soil of any country be not sufficient to support the inhabitants, their very subsistence must necessarily be precarious. The free intercourse among nations in modern times makes such a situation sufficiently safe; but in many times of antiquity no such a state as that of Holland could have existed. There was no city in Greece but what was maintained by the produce of its own adjacent lands, except *Athens*, which, by its commerce, and superior naval force, commanded supplies from all the neighbouring countries.

The only way to encourage agriculture is to excite other kinds of industry, affording a ready market for the exchange of corn for commodities; that is, to make it subservient to commerce. If the inhabitants of any country have no motive to raise more corn than what will be sufficient for their own consumption, they will often not raise even that; and a bad seed-time or harvest will be necessarily followed by a famine. This was frequently the case in England before the bounty was granted for the exportation of corn; since which time, viz. in the year 1689, we have had no such thing as a famine. And what is very remarkable, notwithstanding the increase of the proportion between money and commodities, the price of corn has rather fallen since that time. For whereas, for 43 years before the bounty was granted, the mean

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price of a quarter of wheat was 2*l.* 10*s.* 2*d.*; by an exact calculation of the price of wheat from the year 1689 to the 1752, it appeared to be no more than 2*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.* It does not follow from this that bounties are wise measures. They may be useful for a time. But if any commodity cannot be raised, or exported, without a bounty, it should be considered whether more be not given in the bounty than is gained by raising, or exporting, the commodity*.

That the desire of procuring mere subsistence, without any view to superfluity, is not in all places a sufficient motive to perfect the culture of the earth, seems evident from a comparison of the improvement and populousness of countries with, and without good roads or canals. When the produce of land can be easily exported and exchanged, there is a great additional motive to cultivation, though it would yield as much of the mere necessaries of life (which did not require to be removed from the spot) whether they could be conveyed to a distance or not. It must be observed, however, that in some situations the tools and manure, proper for the soil, must be fetched from a distance.

Both Florence and Naples are so far from adopting our principles of encouraging agriculture by granting a bounty on the exportation of corn, that they lay a duty on all exported corn; so wedded are they to the ancient opinion of preventing the dearness of bread, by keeping the whole growth at home. Some years ago there was an amazing harvest through the whole kingdom of Naples. They had upon their lands a quantity to the amount of two or three hundred thou-

* Of late years, however, the consumption of corn in England has far exceeded the production of it; so that great quantities of it are now imported into that country every year.— *Amer. Edit.*

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sand pounds in value, which they could not consume. There was at that time an application made for an exemption from the duty on exportation, without which the merchant could not find his account in sending it abroad. But though the minister was informed by several persons that the revenue would certainly feel the good effects of so much more money being brought into the country, as fully as in the shape of a duty on exports, he was deaf to all their reasonings, and would not establish so dangerous a precedent as he thought it. The consequence was, that the corn grew mouldy and perished, the next harvest failed, and a dreadful dearth ensued *.

Another advantage attending the raising an extraordinary quantity of corn is, that by keeping bread at a reasonable price, workmen's *wages* are kept lower, and more fixed; a thing of the greatest consequence in manufactures. And it is certain, that neither agriculture nor trade can flourish where the general ease does not begin with the class of labourers. This, indeed, would be still more effectually done by *public granaries;* but the large stocks of merchants who export corn serve instead of granaries, when, upon the apprehension of a dearth, the bounty is taken off, or an embago laid upon exportation.

The advantages of *agriculture* and *commerce* are reciprocal. For, as Postlethwaite observes, whatever hurts trade is in fact destructive of culture; and consequently the interests of both land and trade are best promoted by cultivating such things as commerce points out to be the most beneficial. It is his great maxim, that the only method of increasing our trade, and thereby of augmenting our wealth, is to increase

* Sir James Stuart's *Observations on Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 3.

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our land cultivations, and inclose the waste grounds in the kingdom.

Where there is an uncommon tendency to population in a country, necessity will be a stronger spur to apply to agriculture than the advantages expected from commerce. This is the reason why husbandry has been carried to greater perfection in China than in any part of Europe, or of the world. The encouragement of agriculture is there a just and necessary object of attention to the state. The emperor of China, every year, makes the best farmer of the empire a mandarin of the eighth order. It was with the same view that, among the ancient Persians, the king quitted his state, and lived with the farmers eight days in one particular month of the year. Switzerland too, a populous and barren country, abounds with excellent husbandmen.

Where agriculture is reckoned a merely laborious, and consequently a mean and ignoble employment, it is certain not to be understood, nor much practised: Every man, says Xenophon, may be a farmer: a strong proof, as even Columella hints, that agriculture was but little known in the age of Xenophon. Agriculture is yet far from being brought to the perfection of which it is capable; and nothing but the strongest inducements from commerce, or absolute necessity, the mother of inventions, will enable us to judge of what perfection it is capable.

It was but lately that agriculture was applied to in England. Before we became a considerable commercial state, all the country was possessed by graziers, and the little agriculture that was understood, or practised, among us was confined to the article of corn only. It is but since queen Elizabeth's time that we have had any settled notions about agriculture.

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Mr. Hartlib, to whom Milton dedicated his *Treatise on Education*, says, that old men in his days remembered the first gardeners who came over to Surry, and sold turnips, carrots, parsnips, early peas, and rape, which were then a great rarity, being imported from Holland. They introduced, at that time, the planting of cabbages and cauliflowers, and digging the ground for garden stuff. We also find that cherries and hops were first planted in the reign of Henry VIII. Artichokes first made their appearance in the time of queen Elizabeth; and we still had cherries from Flanders, apples from France, onions, saffron, and liquorice from Spain, and hops from the Low Countries.

Before we pass from agriculture to *commerce*, we must consider the influences and connexions of the arts, manufactures, and sciences, things nearly connected, and highly useful in converting the productions of the earth into proper subjects of commerce. But I shall first give a general view of the progress of men towards wealth, and the classes into which they became distributed by this means. The *progress of society*, and the steps by which nations advance to opulence and power, is one of the most pleasing and useful objects of speculation.

The only original source of wealth and every other advantage is *labour*. By this men are enabled to get from the earth, or the sea, their provisions, materials for their clothing and habitations, and their comfortable subsistence in all other respects. By this they make themselves tools and engines, which shorten labour, and divide it, so as to enable a few to make sufficient provision for a great number.

They who by their industry have acquired property, and who have by the rules of society the power of disposing of it, transmit the whole stock of it to their

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descendants, so as to exempt them from labour. For the advantage of cultivating their land, living in their houses, or making use of their money, others are willing to maintain them without labour, so that they can live upon their *rents*. They who, by their own labour or that of others, are possessed of transferable commodities, can sell them to those who want them, and with the price they get buy others, gaining something by every transfer; and thus, without any proper labour, they live by the *profits of their trade*.

Those who by their labour, their rents, or the profits of trade, have acquired wealth, and want other things, as personal security, personal services, instruction, or amusement, will give their superfluity to others, whose business it will be, without any *productive labour* (or such as will add to the stock and wealth of the nation), to wait upon them, to fight for them, to instruct them, to amuse them, and even to govern them. All those who are employed in this manner may be called the *servants of the public*, and are an article of national expence.

Thus we have got four classes of men: the *labourers* (comprising farmers and manufacturers, whose employment alone is properly *productive*, adding to the wealth of the nation); *landholders*, or *moneyholders*, who live by giving the use of their land or money to others; *traders*, who live by the exchange of commodities; and lastly *servants*, such as magistrates, teachers of religion and science, physicians, lawyers, soldiers, players, &c.

As the product of labour, without greater folly and extravagance than mankind in general are disposed to give into, will in time of peace accumulate, the class of unproductive labourers or servants of all kinds will increase, because the labour of a few will be able to

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support them; and those who have wealth will derive as much advantage from it as they can.

In these circumstances, *knowledge* will also increase and accumulate, and will diffuse itself to the lower ranks of society, who by degrees will find leisure for speculation; and looking beyond their immediate employment, they will consider the complex machine of society, and in time understand it better than those who now write about it. And when mankind in general shall be enlightened with respect to the use and subordination of all the parts of which society consist, they will make the best regulations for the good of the whole. Having a great surplus, they will employ it in the best manner, procuring real conveniences, and retrenching useless expences. If they find they have paid too much for their government, their defence, their religion, the care of their health, or property, &c., they will retrench that expence, and employ it in cultivation, to support greater numbers, who will continually want more means of subsistence, in manufactures, building bridges, making roads and canals, &c. More particularly, it may be hoped that societies, fully instructed by experience, will with the utmost care avoid the ruinous expences and devastation of *war*, which may dissipate in one year more than they can accumulate in a hundred.

The thriving state of the nation may be judged of by the increase of its stock, the cultivation of its land, the value of its manufactures, and the extent of its commerce. If these increase, the nation is wise and frugal, and does not spend more than it can afford. Individuals, when left to themselves, are in general sufficiently provident, and will daily better their circumstances; and as it may be presumed that, in consequence of giving constant attention to their interest,

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they will understand it, it is seldom wise in governors to pretend to direct them. Of all the classes of men above mentioned, the governors are, in general, the most ignorant of their own business, because it is exceedingly complex, and requires more knowledge and ability than they are possessed of*. The waste of public wealth by them is by far the most considerable. By the foolish wars in which they involve nations, and the endless taxes they impose upon them, governors are continually pulling down what individuals are building up; so that, as Dr. Smith justly observes†, "it is the highest impertinence and presumption in kings and ministers to pretend to watch over the œconomy of private people, and to restrain their expences, either by sumptuary laws, or by prohibiting the importation of foreign luxuries. They are themselves always, and without any exception, the greatest spendthrifts in the society. Let them look well after their own expence, and they may safely trust private people with theirs. If their own extravagance does not ruin the state, that of their subjects never will."

The great advantage of an improved state of the arts arises from the *division of labour*, by which means one man, confining his attention to one thing, or one operation, does it in greater perfection, and with much greater dispatch. Dr. Smith observes that, in the present improved state of the manufacture of pins, ten men will make upwards of forty-eight thousand pins in a day; but that if they had all worked separately, and without any of them having been educated to that

* Though this is in consequence of their undertaking more than is necessary for the good of the state. If more was left to the attention and efforts of individuals, the business of government would not be so complex, and persons of inferior abilities might be equal to it.—*Amer. Edit.*

† *Wealth of Nations*, vol. ii. p. 27.

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particular business, they could not, each of them, have made twenty, or perhaps not one, pin in a day.

The advantage we derive from the most common of our arts, in furnishing us with tools to facilitate labour, as well as the great use of *iron*, we see strikingly illustrated in the account which M. Charlevoix gives of the method which the North American Indians took to make a hatchet. Before they were provided with hatchets, and other instruments, they were very much at a loss in felling their trees, and making them fit for the uses for which they intended them. They burned them near the root; and in order to split, and cut them into proper lengths, they made use of hatchets made of flint, which never broke, but which required a prodigious time to sharpen. In order to fix them in a shaft, they cut off the top of a young tree, making a slit in the tree as if they were going to graft it, and into this slit they inserted the head of the axe. The parts growing together again, in length of time, held the head of the hatchet so firm, that it was impossible for it to get loose. Then they cut the tree of the length they judged sufficient for the handle*.

LECTURE L.

The advantages which men and societies derive from the arts, being so great, it behoves wise governors to do every thing they can to facilitate their progress. But there is the greatest danger of their attempting too much, and being deceived by appearances.

It has been a pretty common practice to encourage particular manufactures, and likewise particular kinds

* *Travels in Canada*, vol. ii. p. 126.

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of produce, by giving *bounties* on the exportation of them. But the wisdom of this policy may be questioned.

If the whole property of the nation was in the hand of one person, he would never export any thing that could not find a gainful market. Though the merchant, therefore, who exports goods with a bounty, may gain by such a trade, the nation evidently cannot. In order to favour any particular manufacture or produce, a bounty must either be given for the raising or exporting it, or the importation of the same must be prohibited. But in both cases it is evident that the interest of the consumer is sacrificed to that of the raiser of the produce, or the manufacturer. But these are few, and the consumers many. The only good reason therefore why any particular produce or manufacture is encouraged, is the accommodation of the consumer. What then can be a greater absurdity than for the consumers to tax themselves in the first place to pay the bounty, and then to pay the greater price for the commodity, which the raiser of the produce or the manufacturer (who has no competitor in the market) will naturally lay upon his own goods?

There is a possibility, indeed, that favouring a particular produce or manufacture, in its infancy, may be a means of making it beneficial to the community at large in some future time. But this infancy must have a period. If a man be at the expence of rearing a calf or a colt, it is with a view to its being useful to him some time or another. If a manufacture cannot be continued without the support of government, it is a proof that it is never worth while to support it. The situation of the country is such as that the industry of its inhabitants will be better employed some other way; and when this is discovered, the sooner the bounty is

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discontinued, the sooner will they fall into a more proper mode of industry.

Manufactures cannot subsist without a considerable degree of *security* and *independence*. Men will not exert themselves to acquire much more than a bare subsistence, without a persuasion of the security of their property. In Turkey there is very little motive to industry, because there is no secure possession of any thing. "The inhabitants of Servia," says lady Wortley Montague*, "are industrious; but the oppression of the peasants is so great, that they are forced to abandon their houses, and neglect their tillage." "Sicily," says Mr. Brydone†, "is immensely rich, both in a fine soil and in minerals, but the people are grievously oppressed by government. To what end, say they, should we explore the mines. It is not we that should reap the profit. Nay, the discovery of any thing very rich might possibly prove the ruin of its possessor. Were we happy enough to enjoy the blessings of your constitution, you might call us rich indeed."

The law relating to *apprenticeships* in this country is an impediment to the improvement of the arts. According to it, no person can exercise a trade which existed at the time when the statute was made, till he has served seven years to a master in it. In general, much less time is necessary for the purpose, and many persons find themselves better qualified to conduct a business to which they have not been brought up. The inconvenience of this restriction is lessened by methods that are generally practised to evade it.

Mankind, naturally averse to labour, have in all ages endeavoured to compel others to labour for them; and

* *Travels*, vol. i. p. 153. † Vol. ii. p. 225.

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in Greece and Rome the manufacturers were generally slaves. In modern times, though an end has been put to servitude in the Christian countries of Europe, it has been greatly extended in our colonies, slaves being purchased in Africa and transported in order to their being employed in America. But both the injustice and the ill-policy of this system is now pretty generally acknowledged.

Servitude is the most wretched condition of human nature, because man is capable, in a high degree, of enjoying a state of liberty and self-command, and is therefore more miserable in a state of servitude than other animals, many of whom are more happy in that state than in any other. It is also an argument against slavery, that men, ill brooking that condition, and being often refractory, are exposed to very cruel treatment, and that the most dreadful precautions are thought necessary to prevent their escape, or to punish their revolt. It is another argument against this practice, that no methods can make slaves work with the same spirit and effect as freemen. "Indeed it appears," says Dr. Smith *, "from the experience of all ages and nations, that the work done by freemen comes cheaper in the end than that performed by slaves. It is found to do so even at Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, where the wages of common labour are so very high."

The practice of slavery promotes war, and every method of violence and injustice by which one man can be brought into the power of another, in the countries in which slaves are bought. The negroes, no doubt, propagate faster on account of this traffic. For whatever drain be made for men, it will be supplied by the

* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. i. p. 123.

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greater encouragement to marry; but they propagate only for slavery.

Were all those who are concerned in the purchase or employment of slaves, and without whose concurrence the traffic could not be carried on, apprised of the misery it is the occasion of, especially in Africa, where princes sell their subjects, parents their children, and individuals any person whom they can trepan or overpower,—to say nothing of what the poor wretches (few of whom can be supposed to have done any thing to forfeit their liberty) suffer at sea, and in America,—their humanity would revolt at the scene, and they would as soon as possible employ their capitals in some other way, though their gains should be less.

It is to be hoped that these and other considerations will in time put an end to this abominable traffic. We see some tendency towards it in the conduct of the North American states; and in this country the humanity of the quakers and others is exercising itself greatly for the same excellent purpose*.

The manner in which arts and manufactures operate to increase the power of a state, is by making provision of a *fund of labour* for the use of the state. For since the labour which is bestowed on arts and manufactures only contributes to the greater convenience and ornament of life, it may be spared in case of exigence, and converted, in a variety of ways, to the service of the state. Persons are not easily brought to labour who have not been accustomed to it; and where all the labour in the state is employed about the necessaries of life, there can be no resource in time of

* See the author's just and humane view of this subject in his *Sermon on the Slave-Trade*. 1787. *Works*, vol. xv.—*Ed.*

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war, there being no superfluity of labour in the country, sufficient to maintain an army to fight in its defence. The only advantage of such a people is, that where there are few superfluities there can be but little to tempt an invader.

Of such importance is labour to a state, that it would be better to have mines, which require much labour to extract the metal from the ore, than to find the precious metal formed by nature to our hands. In the former case, it has all the advantages of a manufacture; in the latter, it only raises the general proportion of money to commodities, and in such a manner as to make it a mere incumbrance.

Innumerable facts in history exhibit, in the strongest light, the vast advantage accruing to a people from manufactures, in conjunction with commerce, which are in a great measure inseparable. But the most striking example, and the earliest that appeared in Europe, is furnished by the Flemings, who led the way in improvements of all kinds to this part of the world. They were the first people in these northern parts who cultivated the arts and manufactures. And, in consequence of it, the lower ranks of men in Flanders had risen to a degree of riches unknown elsewhere to persons of their station, in that barbarous age. They had acquired, in the time of our Edward III., many privileges, and a great degree of independence, and had begun to emerge from that state of vassalage in which the common people had been universally held by the feudal constitutions.

In this case, we see that the arts of luxury are, to a certain degree, favourable to liberty. When men, by the practice of the arts, acquire property, they covet equal laws to secure that property. The House of Commons is the support of our popular government,

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and it owed its chief influence to the increase of arts and commerce, which threw such a balance of property into the hands of its constituents.

To form some idea of the advantages resulting to this nation from arts and manufactures, let us consider the numbers of men who are employed about, and maintained by, our home commodities; such as wool, corn, coals, metals, rags, horns, and many other articles; together with the carriage of goods by land and water. Consider, also, the numbers who are employed in manufacturing goods imported, as raw silks, cotton, kid-skins, elephants' teeth, hemp, Swedish iron, Spanish wool, dyeing-stuffs, oil, sulphur, saltpetre, and many more articles.

The number of these latter articles is every day growing less, by the encouragement that is given to raise the materials for manufactures among ourselves; that is, either at home, or in our plantations. In consequence of the excellent methods which have been taken by different societies instituted for this purpose, such a spirit of emulation has been raised among manufacturers of all kinds, as has already put many of our arts and trades upon a much better footing than they were before, and promises a far superior, and almost a new state of things in future time.

The connexion between art and *science* hardly needs to be pointed out. It is the same that holds universally between theory and practice. The great improvement in the arts in modern times has certainly arisen from the late improvements in science. The sciences which have the most immediate connexion with the useful arts are natural philosophy and chemistry; but even the more abstract sciences have ever been, indirectly, of great use to promote a taste for the finer arts; and, in fact, the same ages which have

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abounded with philosophers, have usually abounded with good artists. The arts, in return, promote society and humanity, which are so favourable to the progress of science in all its branches. Mathematical knowledge is of principal use in the construction of engines, which save labour; and to chemistry we owe the fire-engine, our skill in dyeing, and many other arts.

It is often, however, a long time before discoveries in natural philosophy or chemistry are applied to any considerable use. The Chinese were, for many ages, acquainted with the properties of the loadstone, and the composition and effects of gunpowder, but never made any use of the one in navigation, or of the other in war.

Few observations remain to be made on the subject of science, as an object of attention to an historian, after the account which has already been given of the progress and revolutions of it. An historian will soon observe that a genius for science by no means depends upon climate: witness the difference between the ancient and present state of Greece. It will, however, appear that nothing is so favourable to the rise and progress of learning and the arts, as a number of neighbouring independent states, connected by commerce and policy. This was the condition of ancient Greece, and it is that of Europe at present.

The devastations of barbarians, or the persecution of particular persons, whose interests are incompatible with those of knowledge, may destroy records and particular monuments, but do not easily destroy the sciences. Hoangto was not able to destroy learning in China by ordering all the books to be burned. They were preserved with more care, and appeared

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after he was dead. Nay, even long interruptions in the progress of learning are favourable to knowledge, by breaking the progress of *authority*. Thus, upon the revival of learning in the West, the ancient Grecian sects of philosophy could gain no credit, and men began more generally to think for themselves.

An historian will likewise observe, that when *arts* have arrived at a considerable degree of perfection in any place, they have generally begun from that period to decline; one reason of which may be, that when the general esteem is engaged, there is little room for emulation. The paintings of Italy left no room for the ambition of England. The same was nearly the case with Rome respecting Greece; and the finished productions of the French language long prevented the German nation from attending to the cultivation of their own.

However, the extent of *science* is a remedy for this inconvenience. So wide a field is now open to the genius of man, that let some excel ever so much in one province, there will still be room for others to shine in others. And besides, though the *arts*, as music, painting, and poetry, have perceivable limits, beyond which it is almost impossible to advance, this is far from being the case with *science*, of which the human faculties cannot conceive the possibility of any bounds. The discoveries of Newton in natural philosophy, so far from discouraging other philosophers, only serve as an incentive to them in their search after new discoveries. And admitting that the reputation of Pope, and a few others, should check the ambition of succeeding poets, it is only after such a quantity of valuable poems have been produced, that more are hardly desirable. Few people have leisure to read, much

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less to read with care, or to study, all that is really excellent of this kind of the productions of the last age.

I cannot conclude this subject without turning your reflections on the advantages mankind derive from improvements in science and the arts, compared with the state of things in those ages in which men were destitute of them; particularly in those which relate to the food, the dress, and the habitations of the human species. Indeed, nothing can give us a just idea, and a lively sense, of our happiness in the conveniences we enjoy, but a knowledge of the very great disadvantages which mankind in former ages have laboured under.

Not to mention the most credible accounts we have of the state of mankind in the earliest ages, in almost all parts of the world; when they lived in caves, or huts made of the branches of trees and earth, when they had no clothing but leaves, or the raw hides of animals, and no food but the fruits and roots which the earth produced of itself; or sometimes the flesh of animals which they might happen to surprise, eaten raw, or with very little preparation: I say, not to mention this condition of mankind (which yet is scarce inferior to that of many tribes of the human species now existing), if we only for a moment imagine ourselves in the place of our ancestors, who lived but a few centuries ago, we cannot help fancying it to be almost impossible for us to have lived with any comfort; and could the alteration take place, it would certainly affect us very sensibly, and would no doubt be fatal to many of the more delicate among us; though it must be allowed that this is no fair method of judging of the condition of those who never knew a better

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state, but who were from their infancy inured to all the hardships they were exposed to. But, admitting this, it is evident that the best method of making ourselves fully sensible of the real value of any of the arts of life, is to endeavour to form clear ideas of the condition of mankind before the knowledge of such arts. A few examples will best illustrate and enforce this observation.

Linen, of which we are now so fond, and without which we should think ourselves so uncomfortable, was not used, except by the Egyptians and a few people in the East, till a considerable time after the reign of Augustus. The only garb of the ancients, by whom we mean the Greeks and Romans, in the times of their greatest riches and luxury, seems to have been a kind of flannel, which they wore commonly white or grey, and which they scoured as often as it grew dirty.

We think ourselves very happy when we have a comfortable fire in a private sitting-room, or bedchamber; but we should think ourselves much more so, if we considered how lately it is that any such convenience could be had, and that in all the times of antiquity there was only one hearth belonging to any house, placed in the middle of a large hall, from which the smoke, ascending in the middle, went out at a hole in the top of the room; and particularly if we considered that all the habitations of the English were formerly nothing better than the huts of the Scotch Highlanders and the Irish peasantry at this day. Chimneys were not general till about the time of Elizabeth.

By the use of glass in our windows we enjoy the light and exclude the weather, but the wealthiest of the ancients had no such advantage. To how many

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uses does *paper* now serve, for which nothing else would be nearly so convenient? and yet the ancients were obliged to do without it.

Before the 16th century Voltaire says that above one half of the globe were ignorant of the use of bread and wine, which is still unknown to a great part of America, and the eastern parts of Africa. In the 14th century wine was so scarce in England, that it was sold only by the apothecaries as a cordial: at the same time candles were reckoned an article of luxury, shirts were made of serge, linen worn only by persons of distinction; and there was no such things as either chimneys or stoves.

All the conveniences we derive from a knowledge of the mechanical powers,—as mills, clocks, watches, &c.,—are comparatively of very modern invention; to say nothing of printing, and other arts, which are more remote from the consideration of *necessaries;* though many things, from being articles of high luxury, have afterwards come to be generally considered almost as necessaries, as tea is at present. I shall just add that the first coach was seen in England in the reign of queen Mary, that the great convenience of a kitchen-garden can hardly be said to have been known before the reign of queen Elizabeth, that even the potatoe, which is so considerable an article of the necessary food of the poor in many countries, was only imported since the discovery of America, and that there was little or no sugar in all this western part of the world till the sugar-cane was cultivated in our American plantations.

It is a pleasure to trace the several articles of food and dress from the countries where they were first produced, and to go over the several stages by which they have made their progress to us. This pleasure

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we receive in tracing the cherry from Pontus, linen from Egypt, and silk from China. In short, nothing that respects human nature, and the accommodations of mankind upon this globe, is unworthy the notice of a philosopher. Every thing belonging to this subject is interesting to him, and will yield him matter of entertainment and instruction. With the old man in Terence, he says, *homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto.*

LECTURE LI.

No sooner do men find that they can subsist, than they discover a desire to improve their situation and increase their accommodations. If the present *desideratum* be not to be found at home, they will look for it abroad; and there is no situation man ever yet arrived at, or probably ever will arrive at, in which he can entirely acquiesce, so as to look out for no farther improvements. This endless craving, to which the nature of man is subject, together with the activity of the human genius, gave rise to *commerce*, by which mankind are supplied from abroad with the conveniences which they could not find at home.

By commerce we enlarge our acquaintance with the terraqueous globe and its inhabitants, which tends greatly to expand the mind, and to cure us of many hurtful prejudices, which we unavoidably contract in a confined situation at home. The exercise of commerce brings us into closer and more extensive connexions with our own species, which must, upon the whole, have a favourable influence upon benevolence; and no person can taste the sweets of commerce, which absolutely depends upon a free and undisturbed inter-

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course of different and remote nations, but must grow fond of *peace*, in which alone the advantages he enjoys can be had.

The punctuality essential to all commercial dealings must inculcate upon the minds of all concerned in it the principles of strict justice and honour. The only inconvenience is, lest a constant attention to gain should estrange the mind from the sentiments of generosity, and lead to a sordid avarice. But they are persons who deal in small gains, and who are personally concerned in buying and selling, that are most liable to this inconvenience; whereas the large dealings of merchants have often a remarkably contrary effect. By commerce numbers acquire both the wealth and the spirit of princes.

Trade and commerce were so long confined to the lower orders of society, while all the free and the noble were employed in hunting, or in war, that the idea of the former being mean and illiberal is still annexed to it in many parts of Europe, and especially in France*. But the wealth and generosity of merchants have a tendency to change these ideas, and the sentiments of the majority will always influence the minority. Where the greater number of rich people are in business, the rest will be ashamed of being idle. This they say is the case in Holland; and in time the business of a soldier may come to be as disreputable as that of a public executioner.

* But the case is much otherwise since the Revolution in France. The more wealthy individuals, having no court to look up to, and no titles of nobility, or any exclusive privileges, to obtain, will employ their wealth in manufactures and commerce, by which alone they can now rise to much distinction; so that riches will probably be an object with the French as much as it ever has been in England, or even in Holland. —*Editor. Edit.*

This was written before Napoleon was elected emperor.—*Ed.*

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The capital, the proper, and immediate advantage of commerce, is, that it excites industry and increases labour, by the fruits of which a nation may procure themselves the conveniences they want; and thus human life be rendered much happier.

The benefit of commerce arises from the exchange of what can be spared for what is wanted, especially that of provisions, or unwrought materials, raised by the farmer, living in the country, for manufactures produced by those who live in towns; and the less trouble there is in making this exchange the better. If every thing I want is to be had within the island, it is not my advantage to go abroad for it; and if the exchange could be made without money, it would be better still. For money is only a convenience in making exchanges.

The foreign consumption of any commodity occasions the increase of it, by the encouragement given to industry at home, so that the more there is exported of any commodity, the more will be raised of it at home; which abundantly confirms the maxim of sir William Decker, that *It is exportation which enriches a nation*, and demonstrates, more especially, the wisdom of encouraging, as much as possible, the exportation of *necessaries*. While the English raised corn sufficient to supply other countries, they were in no danger of a famine at home. But, before this, history informs us that they had frequent famines.

The abundance which the scriptures inform us king Solomon introduced into the kingdom of Israel, of silver, and of all things requisite to form the conveniences and elegancies of life, by means of his fleets, both on the Red Sea and on the Mediterranean, is a fact, similar to innumerable others which history can exhibit in favour of commerce. Many of these were men-

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tioned in the succinct account which has been given of the history of commerce; from which we may conclude universally, that commerce never fails to make a people wealthy, populous, and powerful.

These advantages never fail to attend commerce in a greater or less degree, whether it be of that kind which is denominated *active*, or whether it be *passive*; that is, whether a nation export their own commodities and manufactures, or the exchange be made by the shipping of those countries with which they have dealings. But an active commerce is by far the most advantageous. The very article of making and managing the ships themselves employs a great number of hands; the gain arising from the freight is considerable; and the naval force it brings to a state is a vast accession of power, and a great security to it.

On the other hand, a passive commerce may be of such a kind as to be of manifest prejudice to a state, just as a private person may spend his fortune in a foolish and extravagant manner.

That commerce only can be gainful to a nation which promotes industry, so as to enable the people to live in affluence without exhausting their revenues. The most gainful commerce to a state, therefore, is, of all others, that in which we export our own manufactures made from home materials. For this employs the labour which is necessary to the cultivation of the unwrought materials, the manufacturing of those materials, and the exportation of the commodities which are made from them.

In this view also, fisheries are peculiarly valuable; as, by means of them, it requires nothing but labour to enable us to open a very gainful market. Fisheries also promote navigation, so as to employ a great number of seamen; and in fact, it is evident from the hi-

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story of trade, and of all maritime powers, not one excepted, that the establishment of great fisheries have always been epochas of a great trade and navigation.

Next to the exportation of home manufactures, and fisheries, the importation of unwrought materials for manufactures is valuable to a nation. It is better than the importation of money: because the manufacture of those foreign materials employs many of our hands at home; and the goods that are made from them are sure to bring in, at the least, much more than the price of the raw materials.

The gain of the merchants, it is said, is not always the gain of the country in general. If, for instance, a merchant import foreign goods, by which the consumption of national manufactures is hurt, though the merchant should be a gainer by those goods, the state is a loser. As, on the other hand, a merchant may export the manufactures of his own country, to his own loss, and the nation's gain. But if the merchants be gainers, the consumers,—that is, those for whose use manufactures are established, having a power of purchasing or not, at pleasure,—must be so too. And if, after sufficient trial, it be found that merchants importing foreign goods can sell those cheaper than the manufactures can be bought at home, it is an indication that it is not for the interest of the nation at large to encourage such manufactures.

Though exportation makes a nation rich, we are not to judge of the quantity of riches which a nation gains by trade from exportation only. The importation must also be considered. If these exactly balance one another, nothing can be said to be gained or lost, just as a person is not the richer for selling a quantity of goods, if he buy to the same amount. Nay, though the exportation be lessened, if the importation be

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lessened more than in proportion, it proves an increase of gainful trade, notwithstanding the decrease of exportation. This, however, is estimating the value of commerce by the mere increase of money. But a nation may flourish by internal commerce only; and what is *external* commerce between two nations not united in government, would be *internal* if they should come under the same government. In every fair bargain, the buyer and the seller are equally gainers, whether money be acquired by either of the parties or not.

It is a great mistake to confound the king's revenue with the gain a nation makes by its trade. No man would presume to say it is more for the public benefit that the nation should expend a million or more every year with foreigners, in order to raise a hundred thousand pounds to the revenue by the customs, than to save that million or more within ourselves, and to raise only the hundred thousand pounds some other way. But ministers of state are apt to estimate the value of every thing to the country by the gain it brings, and that immediately, to themselves.

As commerce increases the wealth and populousness of a nation, it cannot fail to raise the value of lands; so that what is called the *landed interest* is nearly concerned in the support of commerce. And it may easily be shown that a decrease of commerce would more sensibly affect the landed interest than even the merchants, traders, and manufacturers themselves; as these could more easily transport themselves and their fortunes into other countries, than persons who had estates in land.

It is true, however, that trade may increase the value of land, till the value of land become an obstruction to the further increase of trade. For certainly, in a

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country where the trade arises chiefly from its own productions, as is very much the case with England, it cannot exist if the price of land be exorbitant; because that will raise the price of all commodities, so that they will not have the same advantages as before in foreign markets. The commerce of Holland is of a different kind, as the price of their commodities is more independent of their lands; but then that kind of commerce is very fluctuating and uncertain, as the materials of their manufactures must be supplied by other nations, who in process of time may choose to manufacture them themselves.

The legislature of any country has seldom interfered in the affairs of commerce, but commerce has suffered in consequence of it, owing to the ignorance of statesmen, and even of merchants themselves, concerning the nature of trade. And indeed the principles of commerce are very complicated, and require long experience and deep reflection before they can be well understood. But the famous English *navigation act*, passed in the time of the Commonwealth, is an exception to this remark. The purport of that act is, that no nation shall be permitted to import into England any commodities but such as are the growth of the country which imports them. This act was chiefly levelled against the Dutch, who before supplied the English with materials for most of their manufactures: but since that time they have fetched them themselves; and the consequence has been such an increase of the shipping and commerce of England, as has far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of those persons who projected that act. But to make such a regulation as this beneficial to a nation, it must be the interest of other nations to trade with it on its own terms, and one country must take advantage of

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the necessities of others. The time may come in which it will be as politic to repeal this act as it was to make it.

Most politicians have injured commerce by restricting, confining, or burthening it too much; the consequence of which has been, that by aiming at great immediate advantage, they have cut off the very springs of all future advantage. The inconveniences which have arisen to a nation from leaving trade quite open are few, and very problematical, in comparison of the manifest injury it receives from being cramped in almost any form whatever. It may perhaps be admitted as a good general rule, that no restrictions upon commerce are useful but such as oblige the people to increase their own labour, and extend and improve their own manufactures. When Louis XIV. was importuned to admit the English and Dutch herring boats, he said, "No, by no means; if my people will have herrings, why do they not catch them, as the English and Dutch do?"

M. Colbert, a man of great probity, knowledge, and industry, was not only disposed, like other European ministers, to encourage the industry of the towns, more than that of the country; but, in order to it, he was willing even to depress and keep down that of the country. In order to render provisions cheap to the inhabitants of towns, and thereby to encourage manufactures and commerce, he prohibited the exportation of corn, and thus excluded the inhabitants of the country from every foreign market for the most important part of the produce of their industry*. He would have done better to have listened to the advice of an old merchant, who being consulted by him about what he

* Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 3.

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should do in favour of trade said, *Laissez nous faire* (Leave us to ourselves).

Great concerns, which require large stocks, and unanimity in the conduct of them, must necessarily be managed by *companies*, with exclusive privileges. Companies have doubtless been greatly serviceable for the advancement of national commerce in early times. It seems agreed an all hands, that if the East-India and African trades had not been in companies, they could not have been established. But, notwithstanding these effects, in process of time commerce is generally able to do better without them; and the continuance of them often becomes a great obstruction to the trade being carried on in its full extent. Private or separate traders are universally known to take more pains, and to manage more frugally, than companies can, or ever will be able to do. It may, however, be proper to observe, in order to prevent mistakes, that regulated companies have not always one joint stock; but in many of them every member trades upon his own bottom, under such regulations as their charters empower them to make.

The reason why companies are often continued much longer than the interest of the trade requires, is that, growing wealthy, they, by lending money, or other means, become of consequence to the government, which cannot well do without them.

Exclusive and coercive powers vested in towns corporate, and subordinate societies, have all likewise been highly useful in the infancy of trade. In the turbulent times of the feudal system there could have been no security for handicraftsmen and traders but in privileged places, in which they were protected by the lord of the soil, and in consideration of the service they did him. But they are now generally esteemed

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an obstruction to it, by enabling the members of those corporations to impose upon their fellow-subjects, and by discouraging industry.

As commerce consists in the exchange of one thing for another, all the laws which impede the alienation of land, or of any other commodity, obstruct commerce; besides, that they sink the value of land. Commerce never flourished in England till the alienation of land was made easy, by the disuse or abolition of the feudal laws and customs, which confined it to the descendants of the original possessors.

All laws which make the naturalization of foreigners difficult are a discouragement to commerce. To foreigners, England is indebted for all its manufactures, and for all its wealth. And as it is by no means fully peopled, naturalization ought certainly to be made as easy as possible.

No prince can take a more effectual method to ruin the trade of his dominions in a very short time, than by persecution on account of religion. Philip II. of Spain absolutely ruined the fine trade of Flanders, and enriched the Dutch and the English, by introducing the inquisition into those provinces of his empire. The Protestant religion is, on many accounts, more favourable to commerce than the Catholic. In Protestant countries no persons are confined to convents and a single life; and the manufacturers have not their hands so much tied up by holidays. The Japanese are great sufferers by confining their trade to the Chinese and the Dutch, occasioned by the aversion they have conceived for the Jesuits. The Chinese are said to gain a thousand per cent in their trade with Japan, and the Dutch nearly the same.

In enumerating the things and circumstances which are, or would be, favourable or unfavourable to com-

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merce, it is not improper to mention that the uniformity of weights and measures, as well as of coins, would greatly facilitate general commerce. It seems impossible to effect this throughout the world, or throughout Europe; but one would think there could be no very great difficulty to effect it in any particular kingdom. The uniformity of weights and measures would greatly facilitate the internal commerce of Great Britain, and this of itself is certainly an object of considerable importance.

As an admonition to the English to preserve and cultivate their commerce with the utmost attention, it may not be improper to give, from *Anderson*, a brief account of the principal fluctuations of commerce in modern times. "Who would have dreamed three hundred years ago, that those ports of the Levant, from whence, by means of the Venetians, England, and almost all the rest of Christendom, was supplied with the spices, drugs, &c. of India and China, should one day come themselves to be supplied therewith by the remote countries of England and Holland, at an easier rate than they were wont to have them directly from the East, or that Venice should afterwards lose to Lisbon the lucrative trade of supplying the rest of Europe with them? Or lastly, that Lisbon should afterwards lose the same to Amsterdam, or that Amsterdam and Haerlem should gradually lose (as in part has already happened, and is likely more and more to happen) their famous and fine linen manufactures to Scotland and Ireland? We need not add the various removes of the staple for the woollen manufacture, which was first at Venice, Florence, Pisa, and Lucca, upon the early revival of commerce, after the fall of the Western empire, from whence the bulk of it removed about eight hundred years ago to the Netherlands, and from the Ne-

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therlands about two hundred years ago into England; or that the great supply of sugars to all Europe should go from Lisbon to London, and since, in too great a degree, from London to the ports of France. Fine toys, haberdashery, jewels, watches, hardware, hats, stockings, &c. from France and Germany into England. The various removes of the herring fishery also are very remarkable. These instances," as *Anderson* justly subjoins, "render several of the axioms of our older writers upon commerce unsafe to be relied on. Even that excellent treatise of sir Josiah Child is already somewhat liable to this caution, especially when he is writing on the Dutch commerce, which was then in its full perfection, though it has been since considerably eclipsed."

Let us not be discouraged by unsuccessful attempts to extend our commerce into countries yet unknown. Even the abortive attempts of the English, French, Dutch, and Danes, for the hitherto impracticable north-west and north-east passages to China and India, have been productive of several new and considerable sources of commerce, and of the increase of navigation to those northern countries, and to the no small benefit of all the rest of Europe. For to those attempts are owing the Greenland fishery, the Hudson's Bay trade, and the trade to Russia and Lapland.

Many of the received maxims of commerce have for their object the enriching of one nation at the expence of others, arising from national jealousy, as if the gain of one must necessarily be the loss of the other. But the maxim is by no means true; and on the same principle every town in the same country might be as jealous of its neighbouring towns, as nations are of their neighbours.

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In reality, as I have observed before, every fair bargain is a gainful transaction to both the parties, and consequently all nations are benefited by their commercial intercourse. And of the two, the poor are greater gainers than the rich, because the wants of the poor are of a more serious nature than those of the rich. The more wealthy any nation is, the greater power it will have to purchase the commodities of other nations; and no country has so many resources within itself as not to stand in need of others, at least for superfluities.

The happiness of all nations, therefore, as one great community, will be best promoted by laying aside all national *jealousy of trade*, and by each country cultivating those productions or manufactures which they can do to the most advantage; and experience, in a state of perfect liberty, will soon teach them what those are. In this state of things, the only advantage will be on the side of industry and ingenuity, and no man, or nation, ought to wish it to be any where else.

In this natural course of things, the connexions of mankind, in consequence of being found advantageous, would be so multiplied, that they would find a common interest in being at *peace* with one another, and a common loss in hostility. When differences arose they would find some other method of deciding them than by force, and the world would in time recover its pristine paradisiacal state. The present [1792] commercial treaties between England and France, and between other nations formerly hostile to each other, seem to show that mankind begin to be sensible of the folly of war, and promise a new and most important æra in the state of the world in general, at least in Europe. Our jealousy of trade operates to make other nations poor at our own expence. For if it be the wish of any

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people to trade with another nation, it is a proof that they find themselves benefited by that trade.

If any restriction on commerce was ever for the interest of a nation, it was, as I have observed, that which was in part procured for this country by the *act of navigation*. It made it necessary for us to increase our navy, and thereby made us more formidable in time of war. But this was necessarily at the expence of the nation in other respects. For it is evident that we were apprehensive of being served with many commodities by foreigners cheaper than we could be by our own people in the natural course of things: it was therefore only another mode of taxing ourselves for our defence.

Dr. Smith justly observes* that no regulation of commerce can increase the quantity of industry, and consequently the wealth of any society, beyond what its capital can maintain. It can only divert a part of it into a direction into which it might not otherwise have gone; and it is by no means certain that this artificial direction will be more advantageous to society than that to which it would have gone of its own accord.

LECTURE LII.

A GREAT means of the amazing increase of shipping and commerce in modern times arises from foreign COLONIES, of the establishment of which the ancients had no idea. They only formed colonies when they were overstocked with people at home; whereas we almost depopulate ourselves to form them. They had the advantage of the settlers only in view; we, that of the mother-country chiefly. With the ancients, colo-

* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. ii. p. 177.

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nies presently became independent of their mother-country; with us, the connexion with it is strictly kept up. The ancients defended their colonies from their affection and friendship for their former countrymen; we fight for them, as for our property.

It was the possession of colonies which gave the princes of Europe an idea of the importance of trade. Our wars are now chiefly commercial wars; whereas commerce was never made an affair of state before the planting of colonies in the last century. In fact, colonies, conducted according to the modern maxim, viz. of their entire subserviency to their mother-country, are distant nations, supplied with every commodity they want by their mother-country, if she can supply them with it. According to this maxim, in which the liberty and happiness of colonists are not considered, a colony must never interfere with the manufactures of its mother-country, and all its commerce must be carried on by the shipping of its mother-country. The inhabitants of colonies must not even fish upon their own coasts. In short, on this idea, colonies can only be for culture.

Considering how industrious the people of our colonies are, it is no wonder, if we consider this their situation, that, as the sagacious sir Josiah Child many years ago observed, every white man in our colonies finds employment for four at home. Now supposing that, since his time, there may be 250,000 white men in all our colonies (exclusive of women and children, and also of negro slaves, and including about 12,800 sailors employed as well in their own fisheries as in the coasting-trade, and in that also about the continent and island colonies, in 2000 vessels of their own, great and small), then is employment given to no fewer than one million of our own people at home. And as all

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our commerce with America, including the negro trade, may probably employ 1200 sail more of our own British shipping, and 20,000 sailors, it is easy to conceive how vastly profitable these our plantations are to us in every view, whether by setting to work such immense numbers of our manufacturers and artificers of all kinds, or by finding employment for our sailors, ship-builders, and all the trades depending thereon*.

Whether the maxim of the absolute subserviency of colonies to their mother-country be equitable or not, I do not here consider. But that being allowed, the English are justly charged with setting the example of several wrong steps with regard to colonies; as they first began to refine sugars at St. Christopher's. It is, however, pretty manifest, that a mother-country may injure itself by an extreme jealousy of its colonies. This seems to be clearly the case with respect to Ireland, a kingdom dependent on England, and therefore, in fact, much the same as a colony to it. Ireland should certainly be indulged in those branches of trade, in which we cannot undersell the French, and they can. For the Irish, on account of cheapness of living, it is said, can undersell all the world. It seems likewise to be equally short-sighted policy, to prohibit the importation of any Irish commodities, as skins, tallow, butter, &c., on pretence that the permission to do it would hurt the landed interest in England; whereas the consequence would plainly be, to lessen the price of our manufactures; and this would

* These paragraphs were written long before the late American war, and were copied, I believe, from *Postlethwaite*. Since that war the state of things in these respects is much changed. 1793.—But it may not be amiss to preserve the remembrance of a former state of things, and of the maxims adapted to it. The same will apply to the next paragraph relating to Ireland, now united to England.—*Amer. Edit.*

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increase our exportations, commerce, and wealth, and consequently raise the value of land, so as to be a much greater advantage in the end, than any thing that could accrue from the present sale of part of its produce at a little higher price. So that Mr. Postlethwaite seemed with reason to say, that preventing the exportation of cattle from Ireland, in order to encourage home consumption, arises from mistaking the nature of trade; that this monopoly of cattle in the hands of the landholders is both unjust with respect to the rest of the people, and its benefit to the landholders themselves only imaginary.

Little did Great Britain think of the price they were to pay for their foreign colonies in North America. For to this account we must put, besides the expence of planting them (which indeed was so small as to give this country very little original claim upon them), both the expence of defending them, and that of the war in which we lost them. The war before the last, which was undertaken on account of the colonies, cost Great Britain upwards of 90 millions. The Spanish war of 1739 was principally undertaken on their account, in which Great Britain spent upwards of 40 millions. If we call the whole only 100 millions, and add to it the expence of the last war with the colonies and their allies, we may say that they have been the cause of our expending no less than 250 millions. Such is the foresight and wisdom of great nations!

Money, as a commodity which is a convenient substitute for other commodities, is of eminent use in commerce; and a variety of circumstances relating to it deserve the attention both of the historian, who takes notice of the state of trade and commerce in different countries, and of the politician, who would favour commerce.

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If all men could conveniently exchange what they have for what they want, there would be no occasion for money. But they sometimes want to purchase a little more, and sometimes a little less, than any particular quantity that they can conveniently part with. Also sometimes they have a superfluity, which would perish in their hands, and they do not care to give it without some equivalent.

In this case it was very desirable to find something that was not perishable, and at the same time of easy conveyance, which might be considered as the representative of *value in general*. But nothing would have been chosen for this purpose at first but what had some intrinsic value to recommend it, a substance which had uses of its own. Several things have been applied to this purpose in different countries, and at different times. But the metals have been generally found preferable to every thing else, especially copper, silver, and gold. To save the trouble of weighing the quantity, and examining the purity, of these metals, the generality of nations have fallen into the method of stamping them; but the Chinese still take them by weight.

The following are the principal circumstances relating to the *price* of commodities. As the price of things cannot rise where there is no desire to purchase, so let that desire be ever so great, the price cannot exceed what those who want can afford to pay. The price of the necessaries of life, therefore, as sir James Stewart says*, must depend upon the faculties of the buyer; that is, of the lowest class of the people. In the greatest famine, even bread can never rise above that price. For then the common people must actually die.

* *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 397.

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The price of things does not always depend upon the labour bestowed upon them. For sometimes a manufacture is raised by those who only amuse themselves with it, or who have no other use for their time. Hence the cheapness of all sorts of country work in former times, and of the work of nuns at present.

The price of any thing in money, or goods, depends upon competition, or the demand there is for it. When any thing is much wanted, a great price will be given for it; but when few want it, and the owner must part with it, he will be willing to sell it for little.

Price, however, supposes alienation; and a common standard of value supposes a frequent and familiar alienation. "What answer," says sir James Stewart*, "would a Scotch Highlander have given fifty years ago, if he had been asked for how much he sold a quart of his milk, a dozen of his eggs, or a load of his turf." They bore no determinate price, because they were not sold. Where the inhabitants are fed almost directly from the earth, the demand for grain in the public market will be but little, and consequently the price low, whether there be little money in the country, as in Scotland formerly, or much, as in the Indies.

Let the specie of a country be ever so much augmented or diminished, commodities will still rise and fall according to the principles of demand and competition; and these will consequently depend upon the inclinations of those who have property, or any kind of equivalent, to give, but never upon the quantity of coin they are possessed of. At a time when the Greeks and Romans abounded in wealth, when every rarity, and the works of the choicest artists,

* *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 369.

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were carried to an excessive price, an ox was bought for a mere trifle, and grain was cheaper perhaps than it was ever in Scotland*.

If money be above the proportion of industry, it will have no effect in raising prices, nor will it enter into circulation. It will be hoarded up in treasure, where it must wait not only the desire of the proprietor to consume, but of the industrious to satisfy that desire. There never can therefore remain in circulation more than a quantity nearly proportionate to the consumption of the rich, and the industry of the poor*.

The first maxim with respect to money, the standard of all commodities, is, that the nominal species of it should be subject to as little variation as possible. To raise the nominal value of money may serve a particular emergence, within a state, because people will sell their commodities for the same words, as it were, without regard to the meaning of them, at least for some time. Thus, it was observed in the last year of Louis XIV., that when the coin was raised three-sevenths, the prices of things augmented only one-seventh. But with regard to foreign connexions, a prince only cheats himself by that means. Foreigners will take advantage of the illusion, whilst it lasts, and buy their goods with their own bad money; and the par of exchange, which regulates the commerce of different countries, depends entirely upon the relative intrinsic value of the coins of different nations, without any regard to their currency where they are coined.

France robs her subjects by debasing the standard of the coin, and then pays her debts, and afterwards sometimes raises the standard again. "But" says sir

* *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 403. † Ibid. p. 407.

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James Stewart*, "three inconveniences follow on this: first, it disturbs the ideas of the whole nation with respect to value, and gives an advantage in all bargains to those who can calculate, over those who cannot. Secondly, it robs the whole class of debtors when the standard is raised, and it robs the whole class of creditors when it is debased. Thirdly, it ruins credit; because no man will borrow, or lend, in a country, when he cannot be sure of receiving back the value of his loan, or of being in a capacity of clearing himself, by paying back the value he had borrowed."

It has been a false maxim of many princes and politicians, to endeavour to keep all the coin they can within their own territories. The attempt is absolutely fruitless, and if it could succeed, would really be prejudicial to commerce, and the true interest of the state. Where there is money, and commodities are wanted, it will be exchanged for them; and there are so many ways of conveying it, that no power on earth can prevent the circulation. Besides, money can never abandon a nation, where there are people and industry. Industry will raise manufactures, and manufactures will command money. Nay, since a great accumulation of money, which is the universal consequence of an increase of industry and manufactures, necessarily checks the growth of manufactures, by increasing the price of labour, it ought rather to be the aim of the politician to diminish the quantity of current money in the kingdom, since otherwise our poorer neighbours will always be able to undersell us.

The only inconvenience attending a small quantity of current money in a state will be felt in wars, or travelling abroad, where money must be raised at home

* *Political Œconomy*, vol. ii. p. 67.

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to be expended abroad. For it is certain, that were a nation ever so rich in commodities, it could not carry on a foreign war without money: for men cannot carry commodities for their subsistence along with them. In this case, therefore, the more money they can raise at home, and carry along with them, with which to purchase those necessaries, the more advantage they will have.

In this view therefore, only, viz. in case of necessary expences abroad, is it of consequence that what is generally called the *balance of trade* should be in favour of a nation. For certainly that nation which saves the most money by its trade will always be the most powerful. It will have what some call the most conventional riches; and hence riches are called the sinews of war. Otherwise a nation might be much happier at home if they received no money, but only the commodities they wanted, in return for those they raised and exported themselves.

On the contrary, where there is no industry and manufactures, it is impossible to retain money. For above 1000 years, the money of Europe has been flowing to Rome by open and sensible currents; but it has been emptied by many secret and insensible ones; and the want of industry and commerce renders the papal territories at present the poorest in all Italy. Again, what immense treasures have been expended by many nations in Flanders since the Revolution! More money perhaps than the half of what is at present in Europe. But what is now become of it?

It is by the increase or decrease of the quantity of money in a state, that the balance of its trade, or its gain or loss by trade, is generally estimated; and as superior industry will draw a superior quantity of money, there seems to be some foundation for the

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maxim. But then it only shows the balance when left to its natural course. The Spanish princes, by prohibiting the exportation of coin, in fact impoverished their country. As the Spaniards could not exchange it for commodities, it was to them an useless incumbrance. Nay, it was worse than an incumbrance; for as it raised the price of all things at home, it made it impossible for them to establish any manufactures which could be sold in a foreign market.

The increase of money in a country has a favourable operation for a time, because it first comes into the hands of those who are thereby enabled to purchase the produce of the ground, or manufactures, at a higher price than had been given for them before; and this enables the farmer and manufacturer to increase their stock. But when the price of every thing is again fixed, the increased quantity of coin only adds to the load of every man who carries it to market; and if it was a thousand times more than it is, it would be only so much the greater burthen, unless it could be exported for something of intrinsic value.

When money begins to leave any country, the preceding operation is reversed. The farmer and manufacturer, not being able to get the usual prices for their commodities, are discouraged from raising them, and improvement and population will for a time go backwards.

The great advantage which accrued to Europe from the discovery of America, arose not from the greater quantity of gold and silver with which it supplied us, but from new articles of consumption and manufacture, and still more from the spirit of industry which it excited among the different European nations, by supplying them with a new market for their commodities.

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It is peculiar to this country to charge nothing for the *coinage* of money, whereas in France it pays 8 per cent. This is a means of preserving the French coin more than the English. "Nobody, I believe," says sir James Stewart*, "ever imports louis d'ors to be coined in the English mint, notwithstanding the benefit there is in importing gold into England from France, where the proportion of the metals is lower; yet nothing is more common than to carry guineas to every foreign mint at the bare price of bullion." This is there ason why so little English coin, and so much French coin, is found in circulation in countries foreign to both nations. "Louis d'ors," he says, "in consequence of the price of coinage, pass current almost every where for more than their intrinsic value, even when compared with the coin of the very nation where they circulate without the sanction of the public authority. Thus no French coin is melted down, and when the balance of foreign trade is favourable it returns home."

"It is no manner of difference to France," he says †, "to receive for the balance of her trade a hundred pounds of her own louis d'ors, or a hundred pounds of standard gold bullion, at such time as bullion is commonly carried to the mint, because the one and the other will answer the same occasions, both in the Paris market and in most trading towns in Europe."

LECTURE LIII.

To persons in trade, money yields as proper a produce as lands do to husbandmen. Hence the use of it bears a price, as well as the use of land. And *interest*,

* *Political Œconomy*, ii. p. 58. † Ibid. p. 61.

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which is the price of money, the universal representative of commodities, is justly called the barometer of a sttae, showing very nearly the comparative state of the commerce and riches of the nation.

The lowness of interest is almost an infallible sign of the flourishing state of a people. It proves the increase of industry, and a good circulation through the whole state, to little less than demonstration. And though a sudden check to commerce may have a momentary effect of the same kind, it is easily distinguished from the former. Almost all other means of ascertaining the quantity of trade in a nation are very fallacious. The number of tons of shipping, which some have recourse to for that purpose, affords a very imperfect rule to judge of the real riches, or trade, of two nations; for a great deal depends on the difference of bulk and the intrinsic value of commodities.

High interest of money arises from three circumstances: a great demand for borrowing; little riches to supply that demand; and great profits arising from commerce. All those circumstances are marks of a small advance in commerce and industry. In a state where there is nothing but a landed interest, there is little frugality, and therefore borrowers must be very numerous; whereas traders, having gain always before their eyes, are saving. In a monied interest, therefore, there is a great number of lenders, which sinks the rate of interest. It is needless to inquire, with respect to the third circumstance, whether low interest, or low profits, be the cause, or effect, with respect to each other. They both arise from an extensive commerce, and mutually forward each other.

This circumstance clearly shows the low state of commerce in ancient times. We read in *Lysias* of 1000 per cent profit being made on a cargo of 2 talents

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sent to no greater a distance than from Athens to the Adriatic; nor is it mentioned as an instance of exorbitant profit. Agreeably to this, the interest of money was high in ancient times, generally 10 or 12 per cent. Where there is an extensive trade, merchants will endeavour to undersell one another, and manage every thing in the cheapest manner possible, so as to get handsome fortunes by small profits and large dealings.

In China the legal interest of money is 30 per cent*. This is said to be the medium between the rent of good lands and the gains of commerce †. But the same authority says, that money laid out on lands or houses brings at the most 10 per cent‡. Fifty per cent, therefore, must be the medium profit of commerce in that country.

Though an extraordinary quantity of money unemployed, and particularly a sudden acquisition of money, may for a time produce a lowness of interest, as was the case in Spain upon the discovery of America, it does not therefore follow, that where there is much money, interest will be low. The circumstances mentioned above must be taken into consideration. Interest at Batavia is 10 per cent, and in Jamaica 6 per cent, though those places abound more in coin than London or Amsterdam.

Whatever occasions the hoarding of money tends to lessen the rate of interest. General frugality has the same effect. In this state of things, many will be able to lend, and few will be disposed to borrow.

There does not seem to be any more reason why government should fix the interest of money, than the price of any other commodity. The real value of this,

* *Mémoires sur les Chinois*, vol. iv. p. 336.
† Ibid. p. 341. ‡ Ibid. p. 385.

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as well as of every thing else, is best found by the want of it; and to this, government itself must conform. For, by one means or other, the state must always give the price at which the money-holder is willing to part with it. England, towards the close of the last war, [1782,] borrowed at much more than legal interest, though it was nominally at less; for the ministers gave various advantages to those who were willing to lend them money. There may be a convenience in having a determinate meaning to the term *interest*, where it is not defined by the parties themselves; but this should be as nearly as possible its actual value, and vary with it. When persons want money, and the rate of interest is low, they must not only pay the real value of it, but they must likewise indemnify the lenders for the risk they run in breaking the law.

As money is a representative of commodities, so *bills* are a representative of money; and as money is of no use when it cannot be exchanged for commodities, so are bills of no use when they cannot be exchanged for money. But since the value of bills with respect to money is fixed, every bill represents a certain absolute sum; and the proportion between money and bills is not variable, like the proportion between money and commodities. There is no danger of a country being overstocked with bills when there is no fraud in drawing them, since no bill is drawn unless the value expressed in it be forthcoming. The only danger arises from persons promising, in the form of a bill or note, more than they may be able to pay at the time promised. And while a man's credit, or that of a bank, is good, their promissory notes will circulate exactly like cash, without any thing being represented by them. But, provided paper credit, public or private, be kept within tolerable bounds, and the public or

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private funds be able to answer any demands that may be made upon them, it is so far from being an obstruction to commerce, that it is a great advantage to it. It operates in the same manner as the increase of money, and hath the same effects, in promoting industry, and bringing about a more flourishing state of the people. But then this can never be the case for any considerable time, and in any eminent degree, except in opulent and commercial countries, and in those only in which the liberty of the whole people is inviolably established.

Voltaire acknowledges the importance of paper credit, when he says, "We" (viz. the French) "begin to form funds of mortgage, as among the English;" and if in a state purely monarchical, these circulatory notes could be introduced, which at least double the wealth of England, the administration of France would acquire its last degree of perfection.

The history of the *Mississippi Scheme* in France, and that of the *South Sea Company* in England, demonstrate the ill consequences of the too great extension of paper credit. It is not, however, absolutely necessary, though it be convenient, that there be actual cash in every country sufficient to answer the paper credit of it. If there be commodities to answer it, it is the same thing in fact. In that case, notes are only a more perishable kind of money. They represent commodities immediately without the intervention of real coin. The state of the colonies in North America before the Revolution demonstrates this.

It is said that all the money which the North American colonies could possibly get, centred in England*; so that scarce they, or any of the American

* Dr. Franklin, on his examination at the bar of the *Commons* in

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colonies, knew the use of gold and silver passing in current payment. They were obliged to invent a nominal medium of exchange, viz. bills issued by public authority, which went as low as sixpence. This *paper money* served all the common uses of gold and silver money*; and notwithstanding this seeming inconvenience, these people increased most astonishingly in numbers and riches, being furnished with all the conveniences of life, capable of fitting out fleets, furnishing and feeding armies, and all without gold or silver. The Portuguese have gold and diamonds in great quantities in Brasil; but the people are few, ill fed, and ill clothed, nor are they capable of fitting out fleets, or furnishing or maintaining armies.

It may not be improper in this place, though I be writing for the use of the historian, and not of the merchant, to give an idea of the general nature of *exchange*, as the knowledge of it is necessary to understand what writers, even in an historical view, say upon the subject.

When two countries have equal demands upon one another, that is, when neither country receives more goods from the other than what it returns to the amount

1765, stated "the amount of one year's imports into Pennsylvania, from Britain, to be above 500,000 pounds," and "the produce exported to Britain 40,000 pounds."

He further represented the produce of that colony as "carried to the West Indies," and eventually "to different parts of Europe, as Spain, Portugal, and Italy. In all which places," he adds, "we receive either money, bills of exchange, or commodities that suit for remittance, which, together with all the profits on the industry of our merchants and mariners, and the freights made by their ships, centre finally in Britain to discharge the balance." See *A Collection of Papers*, 1777, p. 66.—*Ed.*

* "The prohibition of making paper money," connected with "the restraints lately laid on their trade, by which the bringing of foreign gold and silver into the colonies was prevented," are described by Dr. Franklin among the "causes" which had "greatly lessened" their "respect for parliament." See Ibid. p. 68.—*Ed.*

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of in its own commodities, the exchange is said to be *at par*. There is no occasion for cash in such a commerce; a person who wants to remit a sum of money can easily find a person at home who owes that sum abroad, and his correspondent abroad may draw upon him payable to his neighbour. The coin of each country in this case only serves as the medium of computation in adjusting the value of commodities, and nothing can be gained or lost by the different price of money in either country. For in that case, the value of every piece of money is determined by its own intrinsic goodness only.

Supposing these two places to be London and Amsterdam, and the circumstances of their trade to change, so that the merchants of one of these places, *e.g.* London, import more commodities from Amsterdam than they export to it, a balance of cash will be due to Amsterdam, which it may not be easy to convey; and there will always be more merchants in London who have money to pay at Amsterdam, than there will be who have money to receive there. Consequently, a merchant at Amsterdam, where there are many bills upon London, must pay a premium to have those bills discounted; whereas the few bills at London upon Amsterdam will bear a higher price than their real value, on account of the number of persons who want such bills, having money to pay in Amsterdam. In this case, the exchange is said to be *below par* at London, and *above par* at Amsterdam.

It is plain from these principles, that when the exchange is below par, in any state, that state loses as debtor or buyer, and gains as creditor or seller. There is therefore an additional encouragement to exportation where importation has been excessive, and therefore a constant tendency to a balance of the importa-

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tion and exportation in the several commercial countries of the world.

Lending of money, as well as paying of debts, equally turns the exchange against a country, which shows that the exchange is no rule for judging of the prosperity of trade*.

It must be understood that this account of exchange has nothing to do with the profit of the bankers. They only assist merchants in negotiating their bills, and must be paid for their assistance, whether the persons who employ them be gainers or losers by their dealings.

LECTURE LIV.

After considering the attention that an historian ought to give to *agriculture*, *commerce*, and the *arts* (which are universally considered as the principal means of raising all states to their greatest perfection, in the possession of all the necessaries and conveniences of life, that is, of *riches*, in the only proper sense of the word), we are naturally led to turn our attention to the consequences of this happy state, at which all mankind, and all nations, are aiming, in the influence it has on the tempers and manners of men with respect to virtue and vice, and the reciprocal influence of these affections of the mind upon the outward circumstances of a people. It is only the observation of historical facts that can authorise us to advance any thing with certainty upon this subject.

As a rich and flourishing state of society is the object of all wise policy, it were absurd to suppose that

* Sir James Stewart's *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 36.

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the proper use of riches was necessarily, and upon the whole, hurtful to the members of it. The more conveniences men are able to procure to themselves, the more they have it in their power to enjoy life, and make themselves and others happy. The only danger to their virtue and their interest (which always coincide) is, lest through an immoderate indulgence of their appetites, men contract diseases, enfeeble their constitutions, and shorten their lives. The gratification of their taste for mere *ornament* in dress, equipage, &c., can do no real harm. Wants of this kind, more than all our other wants, promote industry, and are a most effectual means of circulating wealth. The vanity of the French makes them industrious, whereas the pride of the Spaniards makes them idle. It is but a little in comparison that any man could expend in the indulgence of his appetite only; for from this account we ought to exclude those expensive dishes which vanity and a taste for elegance have introduced.

It is said that the French baubles, modes, and follies cost England, in the time of *Colbert*, little less than 800,000 pounds a year, and other nations in proportion. But if the people who bought those superfluities had money to spare for the purchase of them, what harm could there be in indulging their fancy? Let the people who complain of such trifles make them themselves, and enjoy the profits of the sale. It was very absurd in Philip IV. of Spain to forbid his subjects the use of gold and silver ornaments, as if Spain had been an indigent republic. It is perhaps proper to restrain luxury in China, because the lands are barely sufficient to maintain their inhabitants. But it were better to have fewer people, and those better accommodated.

It is said that living in luxury tends to make men

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effeminate and cowardly. But on the other hand, a very low and meagre diet is incapable of giving strength of body, and consequently that firmness of mind, which is derived from what is called better living. Inclemency of weather, extremity of heat and cold, &c., will certainly be best borne by those who have been most used to bear them. But as natural courage depends on bodily strength, and the motive which men have to exert it, surely more spirit and courage may be expected from a man who has had good nourishment, and who has something to defend, than from one who is almost starved, and who has little or nothing to fight for. The English common people may be termed rich and luxurious in comparison with those of the same rank in France; and it is thought that in general they have both more strength of body, and more true courage.

Besides, in a country where there are more riches, there may generally be expected more improvements of all kinds, and consequently more *knowledge*. And knowledge employed in the defence of the state is, in effect, an addition of power. Thus the Romans, by their discipline and skill in war, held out many centuries against the hardy, but ignorant savages of the North.

High living, indeed, certainly enfeebles the body, and it is the source of many other evils; but it is far preferable to a state of idleness and barbarity, which is generally the alternative of it. In a people of the greatest wealth and luxury there is never found that treachery and cruelty which characterize almost all uncivilized and barbarous states; but commonly a higher and juster sense of honour, and a greater humanity of temper. Between the first and second Punic wars, when the constitution of Rome was most

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perfect, the practice of poisoning was so common, that during one season it is said the prætor punished capitally for this crime about 3000 persons in one part of Italy.

As to the fondness for money, which is one great cause of rapacious and unjust methods of obtaining it, and consequently of much vice and wickedness, that must be equal where there are equal opportunities of knowing the use of it. "A porter", says Mr. Hume, "is not less greedy of money, which he spends on bacon and brandy, than a courtier who purchases champaign and ortolans." Nothing can restrain a love of money but a sense of honour and virtue, which may reasonably be expected to abound most in an age of luxury and knowledge. In Poland, where there are the fewest arts and improvements of any kind, venality and corruption prevail to the greatest degree imaginable; and in England the electors are more corrupt than the elected.

With respect even to a taste for ornament, that innocent and really useful branch of luxury, it appears to be every where equal to its power of showing itself. The Hottentot is as proud of his bladder fastened to his hair, as the European of any ornament he can put on. The native Americans carry their taste for ornament to the most ridiculous contrivances. Their women, and even their men, were found with plates of gold hanging from their noses upon their upper lips.

Idleness is the great inlet to the most destructive vices. It has therefore been the object of every good statesman to keep the bulk of the people as much as possible fully employed. The Romans always severely felt the effects of a disbanded army; and a prodigious increase of robberies, and public violence of

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every kind, is always the consequence of the like event with us. For the same reason, a great number of livery-servants, who are both idle and vicious, and who have little to do, are a great nuisance to society. The unbounded violence of the feudal times was committed by men who had hardly any thing else to do. Almost all the disorders of the Roman state, towards the decline of the republic, may also be ascribed to the absolute idleness of most of the inhabitants of Rome. They were maintained by distributions of corn, for which they paid nothing. Consequently all tillage and husbandry was neglected, and they were at liberty for any act of violence they could be instigated to. For the same reason many holidays are very hurtful to the state; and it was an excellent law at Athens that excused a man from maintaining his father if he had taught him no trade.

Many states in the early period of their history have been remarkable for their frugality and virtue, which, in consequence of becoming rich, have become abandoned to vices of all kinds. The difference may chiefly be ascribed to their constant employment, and an equality of rank and fortune, in the former case. This latter circumstance is of considerable consequence. Where there are no persons of overgrown fortunes, there is nothing greatly to excite a spirit of envy and emulation, of ambition and rapaciousness, through the influence of which, men overcome their natural aversion to other vices. In the early times of the Roman commonwealth an heiress might safely be trusted with her nearest relation; but when the manners of the Romans were changed, they were obliged to alter that law. In the former period, the people did not even make use of the power they had contended for, of choosing their magistrates from their

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own body; but afterwards they abused that, and every other power.

Observations similar to these may be made concerning the succession of princes in most empires. The kings of all the twenty-two dynasties in China began with a vigorous application to business; but their successors grew more and more effeminate, till at last they were dethroned by some enterprising usurper.

The largeness of capital cities is also a great means of promoting the most destructive luxury. In short, luxury may be said to be in proportion to this circumstance, together with the inequality of fortunes and the riches of a state. When persons who have wealth at their command live near together, they are constantly and unavoidably actuated by a spirit of emulation to go beyond one another, in every article of extravagance and expence. And considering how many prudent methods there are of distributing money, without encouraging idleness, it is to be lamented that so much of it should be squandered away to so little purpose. The same care and toil which would raise a dish of peas at Christmas, would give bread to a whole family during six months.

The consequence of absolute corruption and profligacy of manners is dreadful indeed. It is inconsistent with the very being of civil society. Where the passion for wealth, as the means of luxury, is superior to every other affection, it is no wonder if a man should sometimes think it his interest to sacrifice his country, and every principle of honour and conscience, to it.

Above all other methods, the practice of *gaming* is the greatest incentive of avarice, profusion, and profligacy of every kind. A man who has gained an estate by the turn of a die cannot be supposed to use it with

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the same moderation and prudence as if he had acquired it by his own industry; and a man who loses an estate by the same means seldom finds himself disposed to attempt the recovery of it by any other, at least, any more honourable. His mind is then ready to catch at any method which will enable him to repair his fortune as expeditiously as he lost it; and if bribery and corruption be necessary, it is to be feared he will not make much scruple of them.

There is no effectual method of restraining vice of all kinds but by early and deeply inculcating the principles of integrity, honour, and religion, on the minds of youth, in a severe and virtuous education. After this they will hardly be seduced very soon; and when sobriety and virtue are become habitual to them, they will both find their greatest satisfaction in such a life here, and conceive the noblest and best founded hopes of happiness from it hereafter. And (notwithstanding the advantages which indirectly accrue from vice and folly) men of wealth and influence, who act upon the principles of virtue and religion, and conscientiously make their power subservient to the good of their country, are the men who are the greatest honour to human nature, and the greatest blessing to human societies.

LECTURE LV.

THE sources of general happiness in a state must not always be looked for in such striking circumstances as government, religion, laws, arts, and commerce, though an attention to these be allowed to be the most essential in a well regulated state. Allowing these requisites to prosperity to be in the best condition ima-

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ginable, we must wait till we have taken a nearer view of a people, in private and domestic life, before we can justly pronounce whether they really *enjoy* their situation. We must not infer that because men's liberty and property are secure, and in a way of being advanced, that therefore they are *happy*. We must also inspect their prevailing manners and customs, consider the terms upon which common acquaintance live and converse together, and particularly in what manner the two sexes behave to one another. Other objects of attention are such as may more properly be said to guard against unhappiness. These are the things which actually impart the chief pleasures that sweeten the cup of life, which diffuse a spirit of cheerfulness over society, and give a relish to all the advantages of it.

Both history and experience inform us, that mankind are naturally selfish, sensual, haughty, overbearing, and savage; and yet without a spirit of moderation, humanity, and condescension, there can be no good harmony and confidence in society. Society, therefore, can never arrive at perfection till those vices to which men are most prone be either eradicated or disguised, and the opposite virtues either acquired or counterfeited. Absolutely to eradicate vices and acquire virtues, is not to be expected from the bulk of mankind. It is happy, therefore, when, from a sense of decency and honour, they learn the art of preserving the appearance of virtue. For if that appearance be habitual and uniform, it will have nearly the same effect in society; though the virtues themselves would enable a person to contribute to the happiness of others with far less pain and mortification to himself.

True *politeness* is the art of seeming to be habitually

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influenced by those virtues, and good dispositions of mind, which most contribute to the ease and the pleasure of those we converse with. And wherever nature has given the mind a propensity to any vice, or any quality disagreeable to others, refined good-breeding has taught them to throw the bias on the opposite side, and to preserve the appearance of sentiments quite contrary to those they are naturally inclined to.

The ancients knew little or nothing comparatively of true politeness, and hence we may conclude they had but little enjoyment of society. The scurrility and obscenity which appear in the most admired Greek and Latin writers are abominable. That they had no idea of politeness properly so called, may be seen by another circumstance. When any thing is cultivated, whether it be an art, a science, or a branch of virtue, its minute distinctions and subdivisions open themselves to view, and are universally observed. Thus with us a sense of honour and virtue are two things; with the ancients they were the same: whence we may conclude, that with them they were little cultivated or understood; and that politeness, which depends very much on a nice sense of honour, as distinct from virtue, could hardly be known to them. All the politeness and civility which the ancients arrived at was derived from books and study. It was a saying of *Menander*, that it was not in the power of the gods to make a soldier polite. So different were their notions of politeness from ours.

Indeed, the equality of popular states is very unfavourable to politeness. The haughty republican, who is constantly engaged in a fierce contention for his own prerogatives, is not likely to acquire a habit of

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condescension to others; whereas in monarchies, where all the members of the state are more dependent on one another,—and especially in European monarchies, where even the prince himself is dependent on the people,—an habitual desire of pleasing is naturally generated, in which all appearance of selfishness, and every unsociable disposition, entirely vanishes, and every one seems to have no other object than the ease and the pleasure of others.

The perfection of complaisance (though perhaps not proper *politeness*) is no where to be seen but in China. There, far from being confined to the higher ranks of men, even the lowest orders of the people are actuated by it. The many forms which must be observed in the common intercourse of life, and which must be all broken through before persons can quarrel with one another, contribute not a little to preserve the profound tranquillity which reigns through the whole of that vast empire. The epocha of all the politeness the Romans ever had was the same with that of the establishment of arbitrary power.

Since, however, the members of every republic are, in fact, closely connected with, and dependent upon, one another, and it is peculiarly the interest of all who are candidates for office and power to court the good opinion of the lowest vulgar, I do not clearly see why complaisance should not gain ground, and become habitual, in a popular state; though it must be acknowledged, that that *kind* of complaisance which is acquired by courting, and adapting one's self to the taste of the populace, is very different from that complaisance which is acquired by a man's studying to recommend himself to his superiors. It is certain, however, that it was not the form of their government only

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that kept the Romans so long strangers to true politeness.

The Romans had none of those diversions and amusements which, though they contribute to the dissipation of our time, do greatly promote the humanization of our manners. They had no visiting days, no balls, no assemblies of noblemen and persons of distinction at ladies' houses. The women saw each other only at the shows, the theatres, and the entertainments begun by Nero. Even plays were seldom exhibited at Rome in comparison of what they are with us. They were more frequent indeed at Athens, where gentlemen were not ashamed to dance, or even to appear upon the stage themselves, and where the manners of the people were infinitely more agreeable than the manners of the Romans, who were ashamed of dancing, and who took pleasure in nothing but manly exercises, shows of gladiators and wild beasts.

The practice of domestic slavery could not fail to give a savage turn to the disposition of the free-born ancients, and particularly of the Romans in their later times, when they made so much use of slaves*. What humanity and delicacy of sentiment could be expected from a people who were not ashamed to suffer their old and useless slaves, when worn out in their service, to starve on an island in the Tiber†, as was the common practice at Rome? It was a professed maxim of the elder Cato to sell his superannuated slaves at any price, rather than maintain what he esteemed an use-

* "The Romans," says Montesquieu, "being accustomed to trample upon mankind, in the persons of their children and their slaves, could know but very little of that virtue which we distinguish by the name of humanity." See *Roman Annals*, 1760, p. 462.—*Ed.*

† Cicero, somewhere, imputes this practice to Cato the elder, and justly censures him.—*Ed.*

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less burthen. A chained slave for a porter was a common sight at Rome. Vedius Pollio used to throw his slaves who had disobliged him into his fish-ponds, to be preyed upon by the mullets. In the Roman laws slaves were always considered, not as *men*, having any rights of their own, but as *res*, the mere property of their masters*.

The feudal times, which succeeded the Roman empire, were as little favourable to politeness and the true enjoyment of society. The first dawnings of politeness in later times appeared at Florence, about the age of Petrarch. It was more conspicuous in the family of the Medici, and at Rome in the age of pope Leo. It then made some figure at the court of Spain, during the flourishing state of that monarchy; but received its last improvements in France, in the middle and latter end of the reign of Louis XIV.; and the French are now thought to have in a great measure perfected that art, the most agreeable of all others, *l'art de vivre*, the art of society and conversation; and they have the satisfaction of seeing their taste for politeness, luxury, and entertainments followed in all parts of Europe, which they may look upon as their own forming.

* See on the subjects of this paragraph, supra, p. 56, Note; Dr. Robertson's Sermon, in 1755, *on the Situation of the World at the Time of Christ's Appearance*, ed. 5, pp. 30, 31; Millar *on Ranks*, 1771, pp. 207 and 232; Bishop Berkeley's *Alciphron*, dial. v. sect. 12.; Hume *on the Populousness of Antient Nations*, discourse x.; and Bishop Porteus *on the beneficial Effects of Christianity*, pp. 16, 17, and 85.

Dr. Priestley, in another place (*Theol. Repos.* vol. iii. p. 29), contrasts "that extensive and perfect *benevolence* which is so strongly inculcated in the New Testament," with "that more limited benevolence which is treated of by the heathen moralists, and which admitted slaves to none of the privileges of men." See Priestley's *Works*, vol. ii. pp. 246, 247.

The following is Rousseau's impartial testimony: "La philosophie ne peut faire aucun bien, que la religion ne le fasse encore mieux: et la religion en fait beaucoup que la philosophie ne sauroit faire." *Emile*, tom. iii. L. 4.—*Ed.*

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"In the reign of Louis XIII.," Voltaire says, "the minds of men were generally gross and uncultivated; a savage pedantry soured the minds of all the public bodies appointed for the education of youth, and even those of the magistracy." It was only under the administration of Richlieu that the French began to make themselves esteemed every where by their agreeable and polite manners, though that great minister himself lived to see but little more than the dawnings of the present splendour of his nation. "He had given balls," says the same writer, "but they were without taste, as were all the entertainments before his time." The French, who have since carried the art of dancing to perfection, had only a few Spanish dances in the minority of Louis XIV., as the *saraband*, the *courante*, &c.; though the French vivacity, and regard for the fair sex, were taken notice of in a much earlier period. And one may almost judge of the politeness of a people, and of all refinements in their behaviour, from this single circumstance, viz. the treatment of women among them.

Where the intercourse between the sexes is open, it is impossible but that there should be a mutual desire to please, which will give the male sex a softness of temper, and tenderness of sentiment, which they could never have acquired by conversing with their own sex only; and without which, the temper and manners even of the females could not have been the most lovely and engaging. And, indeed, the seeds of politeness, though they were long buried in the barbarity of the feudal customs (when a woman might be seen waiting whole days in a church till the vassal, to whom the feudal lord had presented her, either married her or compounded), may be discovered in the earliest customs and laws of the Northern nations. The Scythians and the Goths never thought of depriving women of

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their liberty, but made them equal with themselves. A fine for injuring a woman was double of that for the same injury done to a man.

Some, however, say that the very high distinction with which the sex is treated in Europe is to be looked for from another quarter. It came, they say, from the Saracens, who brought it into Spain; and that the schools of regulated gallantry, which among the Arabs and Moors were connected with their original institution, found a ready reception among the Spaniards, who even improved its forms and ceremonies, and communicated them to all Europe. It is certain that the embellishments of the Arabian compositions are adventures, festivals, and heroic feats, in the cause of love.

The laws which regulate and direct the treatment of women depend very much upon the climate of a country,—so that some nations are deprived by nature of the very means of politeness. In warm climates men's passions are certainly more violent than in those which are cold or temperate. This is very evident with respect to Spain and most of the southern parts of Asia. The classical books of China consider it as a miracle that a man should find a woman alone in a remote apartment of a house, and not offer violence to her. And when love goes beyond a certain pitch it renders men jealous, and cuts off the free intercourse between the sexes, on which the politeness of a nation will always depend; so that nations in temperate climates stand the fairest chance for this, as well as for most other kinds of improvement.

It must likewise be considered, that in hot countries women are marriageable at ten or twelve years of age, which is before their understandings can have ripened, and consequently before they can have acquired any influence; and that they are generally past child-bear-

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ing, and have outlived all their charms, about thirty, when their understandings are in perfection. The consequence of this is, that women are only considered as the objects of pleasure and luxury, and not as the partakers and promoters of it.

In the East, women, being born slaves, have seldom any education. They never appear at entertainments, they impart no cheerfulness to their master's heart, nor introduce gaiety into the public manners, but are always strictly guarded by eunuchs, as the mere property of the men. "In Persia," says M. Chardin, "they give the women their clothes, as if they were children." Indeed, it were highly imprudent in those countries to consider the women in any other light, or to give them more liberty. In Turkey, Persia, Indostan, China, and Japan, where the women are strictly confined, their morals are admirable; whereas, in the Indies, and other places where the civil government is not so regular, men cannot attend to the morals of their wives, and their irregularities are said to be very great.

"It is a happiness," says Montesquieu, "to live in a country where the charms of the fair sex polish society, and where the women, preserving themselves for their husbands, serve for the amusement of all."

The Athenians derived considerable advantage even from their courtezans who had had a good education. Their houses were resorted to by the first men in the commonwealth, and some of their greatest statesmen and best orators are said to have derived their finest accomplishments from their conversation. The history of Pericles and Aspasia is well known. The like advantages could not be derived from the company of the free-born Athenians. No woman of character among the Greeks ever conversed with any persons but those

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of her own family; and in that they were confined to the most remote apartment of the house, to which the men had no access. As for the Romans, what delicacy could we expect from them, when divorces were so easy and customary amongst them as almost amounted to a lending and exchanging of their wives, as Cato is said to have parted with his wife to Hortensius*. As well almost might we expect delicacy or politeness from our ancestors the Britons, with whom it is said to have been customary for ten or a dozen men to live together, having their wives and children in common.

In all ancient nations, and early times, we read of men giving money for their wives, instead of receiving portions with them; a plain mark in how unfavourable a light, with respect to politeness, they were considered. They were not treated as the companions, but as the property, and serving for the convenience of their husbands.

LECTURE LVI.

NEXT to the *forms of government* and the subject of *laws*, the influence of *religion* on civil society cannot fail to engage the attention of a reader of history; and legislators and ministers of state have too often found it one of the most powerful instruments of civil policy, the history of almost every country affording instances of its being either an excellent ally to the power of the civil magistrate, or the most dangerous rival he can have. By *religion* I here mean, in general, that principle by which men are influenced by the dread of evil, or the hope of reward, from unknown and invi-

* On whose death it is also said that Cato again received her.—*Ed.*

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sible causes, whether the good or the evil be expected to take place in this world or in another; which comprehends enthusiasm, superstition, and every other species of false religion, as well as the true.

History exhibits the most frequent and the most striking instances of the power of this principle in barbarous nations; and therefore, if properly applied, it comes most seasonably in aid of the imperfect state of government in those countries. The notion which prevailed in the barbarous times of Greece, that the ghosts of deceased persons haunted their murderers, must have had a considerable effect to prevent those violences. The superstition with which the rights of hospitality are observed in uncivilized countries is of the same nature. The strong propensity to superstition in the early ages of Rome was a great means of keeping the boisterous spirits of the Romans in tolerable order, in so ill-balanced a constitution as theirs was. Of this there are upon record several remarkable instances. When the tribunes opposed Q. Cincinnatus in raising an army, contrary to the inclinations of the body of the people, and with views which were known to be opposite to the interest of the people, the old general cried out, "Let all those who took the oath to the consul the preceding year march immediately under my standard;" and they instantly obeyed. It was not even in the power of the tribunes to persuade them they were not bound by that oath.

With the Romans, and many other nations in a state equally barbarous, the obligation of religion was generally much stronger than that of the plainest dictates of morals. When the Roman commons at one time formed a design to retire to the sacred mount, in opposition to the senate and consuls, they seriously proposed to kill one of the consuls, because they imagined

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that otherwise they should be bound by the oath they had taken to him. The reason why people in barbarous countries, and unformed governments, are more liable than others to the influence of religion or superstition, equally affects all people who have little knowledge of nature, and are subject to a great variety of fortune and unforeseen ill accidents, depending upon unknown and uncertain causes. This may easily be observed even in gamesters, though the greatest free-thinkers, and the most irreligious of all mankind in most respects. What is cursing their ill luck, so emphatically and earnestly as they often do, but a species of superstition?

The use of religion to a state is most clearly seen in the courage of the first Saracens, who knew not what it was to fear death, nay exulted in the very face of it, from the belief that the joys of Paradise were the certain and immediate reward of all who died in battle.

The superstition of the Lacedæmonians and Romans often checked and restrained their martial courage for a time, but it made it regular and firm when it was exerted. The Lacedæmonians would never march till after the full moon, nor would they fight at the battle of Plateæ till the sacrifices were favourable, though they were drawn up in their ranks for the engagement, and the enemy were ready to cut them to pieces. But no sooner did the priests allow them the use of their arms, than their shock was irresistible. In Turkey it is from religion that the people derive their greatest reverence for the prince, which cuts off all hopes from every other family of succeeding to the crown, and is a great means of preserving tranquillity in that vast and ill-governed empire.

These happy effects of religion coincide with, and second, the views of the civil magistrate. But religion

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has often operated powerfully in favour of the best interests of mankind, independently of, and in contradiction to, the views of the civil magistrate. It has been of excellent use to restrain the extravagance of despotic power in all ages and all countries of the world. "What would have become of Spain and Portugal," says Montesquieu, "if it had not been for religion?" And for this reason he says (what was mentioned before in another view) that if the English ever be slaves, they will be the greatest slaves. It is an observation of Mr. Hume's, that the precious sparks of liberty were kindled and preserved by the Puritans in England, and that "it is to this sect, whose principles appear so frivolous, and whose habits so ridiculous, that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution." We shall take the compliment, and despise the reflection.

The capital advantages derived from christianity in this western part of the world is the total abolition of slavery, in consequence of its raising men's ideas of the importance of the human species. After the introduction of christianity into the Roman empire, every law which was made relating to slaves was in favour of them, till at last all the subjects of the empire were reckoned equally free.

Indeed, christianity is almost incompatible with absolute despotic power, both in sovereigns and private persons. "It has," says Montesquieu, "prevented despotism from being established in Ethiopia, notwithstanding the heat of the climate, the largeness of the empire, and its situation in the midst of African despotic states."

We may, moreover, see in the conquests of Jenghis Khan and Timur Bek what we owe to the equitable rights of nations, established by christianity, which

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leave to the conquered, life, liberty, laws, possessions, and generally religion.

Some advantages have indirectly arisen from the greatest corruptions of christianity, from the exorbitant power of the pope, and the superstition of the popish worship. The union of all the Western churches under one supreme pontiff facilitated the intercourse of nations in barbarous ages, and tended to bind all the parts of Europe into a closer connexion with each other; and thus prevented the several governments of it from falling, upon the dissolution of the Roman empire, into that disjointed state in which they were found before the establishment of it. And the pomp of the popish worship contributed greatly to prevent the fine arts from being totally lost in the barbarism of Europe, and to their revival, antecedent to the revival of *learning* in this western part of the world.

I would be far, however, from asserting that religion, according to the general definition I have given of it, has been universally useful in society. It has often been greatly and evidently hurtful, both in the hands of the civil magistrate, and out of his hands. The Jewish strictness in keeping their sabbath was very near being fatal to them in the beginning of their wars under the Maccabees; as the superstition of the Egyptians was to them when they were invaded by Cambyses, who defeated them by placing in the front of his army those animals which the Egyptians thought it impiety to injure. The religion of the Egyptians was also in other respects extremely prejudicial to them. It made them averse to all intercourse with strangers, and consequently withheld from them many of the advantages of commerce. The ancient Persians were sufferers by their religion in the same respect.

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It made them to look upon it as a crime to navigate the rivers, for fear of disturbing the elements. Even to this day the Persees consider those persons as atheists who make long voyages.

Ignorance and superstition (which always proceed from a want of knowledge, putting imaginary causes in the place of true ones) have been the occasion of the most lamentable evils in the government of states.

The *Commentary* on *Beccaria** says, "that there has been above an hundred thousand witches condemned to die by christian tribunals †."

The substitution of ceremonial for moral duties is one of the greatest abuses of religion. Things of this kind, so contrary, one would think, to common sense, would not be credible at this day, were they not too well authenticated. But we see it abundantly exemplified in all religions, and as much in the abuses of christianity as in any other. The Mahometans lay the greatest stress imaginable on things which have no connexion whatever with moral virtue. Sir James Porter says, "There is no command in the Koran more energetic, nor held in greater respect by Mussulmen, than the pilgrimage to Mecca. A *hadgi*, or pilgrim, is always reckoned regenerate; he who has not been there laments,—he deplores his own situation in life, which has not permitted him to perform this duty; and is anxious for the state of his soul ‡."

False principles of religion have encouraged men to commit the most horrid crimes. "Jaurigny and Balthazar Gerard, who assassinated William I. prince of Orange; Clement, the Dominican; Chatel, Ravaillac,

* Attributed to Voltaire.—*Ed.*

† *Essay on Crimes and Punishments*, p. xxxv.

‡ *Observations on the Turks*, vol. i. p. 19.

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and all the other parricides of those times, went to confession before they committed their crimes*."

The opposition between ecclesiastical and civil law has been the occasion of strange inconsistencies in the conrule of human duty.

The slavery of mankind to their priests in barbarous ages is hardly credible. Vinegas, in his history of California, says†, that the people of that country bring their priests the best of the fruits they gather, and of what they catch in fishing and hunting; these priests terrifying them with threatenings of sickness, disaster, and failure of harvests; at other times giving them the most sanguine hopes of affluence. For they pretend to be possessed of knowledge and power sufficient to accomplish all this, by means of their intercourse with invisible spirits. What strengthens their authority is their being the only physicians, and all their medicines being administered with great ostentation and solemnity.

The hardships that superstition leads men to inflict upon themselves are sometimes very extraordinary. Charlevoix says‡, "The invitation to hunt the bear by the nations of Canada is made with great ceremony, and followed by a fast of ten days continuance, during which it is unlawful to taste so much as a drop of water; yet they sing the whole day through. The reason of this fast is to induce the spirit to discover the place where a great number of bears may be found. At their return from the hunting, the first dish served up is the largest bear that has been killed, and that whole and with all its entrails: he is not so much as flayed, they being satisfied with having singed off the hair. This feast is sacred to some genius, whose

* *Commentary* on *Beccaria*, p. lv. † Vol. i. p. 97.
‡ *Travels*, vol. i. p. 181.

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indignation they apprehend, should they leave a morsel uneaten. They must not so much as leave any of the broth in which the meat has been boiled, which is nothing but a quantity of liquid fat; and there never happens a feast of this sort but some eat themselves to death, and several suffer severely."

The tortures which false religion makes men inflict upon themselves and others are dreadful to think of. To this account we must put all the human sacrifices, and especially the burning of children alive, in ancient times, and of women with their dead husbands in Indostan at present. In that country there is an order of men called *Faquirs*, or *Johgies*, who make vows of poverty and celibacy, and in order to obtain favour of their god Brama, suffer the most dreadful tortures. Some stand for years on one foot, with their arms tied to the beam of a house, or the branch of a tree, till their arms settle in that posture, and ever after become useless; and some sit in the sun with their faces looking upwards till they are incapable of altering the position of their heads. Others, it is said, make a vow never to sit or lie down, but either to walk or lean. Accordingly, a rope being tied from one bough of a tree to another, a pillow or quilt is laid upon it, on which they lean. But these are said to alter their posture when they pray, being drawn up by their heels to the bough of a tree, their head hanging down towards the earth, as unworthy to look up to heaven. The people, in all these cases, make a merit of feeding them. Mr. Grose says*, that "a Gentoo was near perishing with thirst, though there was water enough on board, because he would not taste that which belonged to a person of another religion."

* *Travels*, vol. i. p. 188.

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The cruelties of the Mexicans to their prisoners, and also their severities to themselves, exceed all that we know of in modern times. At the dedication of the great temple at Mexico, Clavigero says* there were 60,000 or 70,000 human sacrifices. The usual annual amount of them was about 20,000.

The Mexicans, being accustomed to the bloody sacrifices of their prisoners, shed also much of their own blood. It makes one shudder, says this writer, to read of the austerities they exercised on themselves, either in atonement for their offences, or in preparation for their festivals. Among other severities, their priests used to thrust sharp instruments through their tongues. Among the Tlascalans few could bear the severities of their dreadful annual fast†.

How dreadful the power of religion may be when conducted by improper hands, may be seen in the horrid excesses of the *Anabaptists* in Germany about the time of the Reformation; of the *Levellers* in England during the civil wars‡; and the desperate courage and shocking cruelties of that people in Asia from whom we borrow the term *assassin*. These people were so devoted to their chief, that they esteemed it glorious to die at his command, and would cheerfully engage in any undertaking which he enjoined them, though they were sure to suffer the most cruel death in consequence of it. By the hands of these assassins fell many princes and chiefs of the Christian crusaders in

* *History of Mexico*, vol. i. p. 281. † *Ibid.* p. 288.

‡ These *Levellers*, the early detectors of Cromwell's designs upon the Commonwealth, appear to have been grossly misrepresented by their opponents. They are, however, described by a modern writer as having "comprised a large body of Englishmen, of the finest sense, purest manners, and most enlightened religion." See the *Leveller* (first printed 1659); *Harleian Miscellany*, vol. vii. pp. 36—46. *Monthly Repos.* vol. vi. pp. 23, 88.— *Ed.*

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the holy wars; and no precautions could be effectual against their attacks. For almost any man may command the life of another, if he make no difficulty of sacrificing his own.

The evils which countries have suffered in consequence of the mad superstition of their magistrates are endless to enumerate, and horrible to think of. Above 800 persons were burned in England for their adherence to the protestant religion in queen Mary's reign*; and in the several persecutions promoted by Philip II., no less than 100,000 persons are said to have perished by the hand of the executioner. Philip III., from the same principle, drove more than 900,000 Moriscoes out of his dominions by one edict, with such circumstances of inhumanity in the execution of it as Spaniards alone could exercise, and the inquisition alone approve. "This inquisition," as sir Josiah Child observes, "has contributed more to depopulate Spain than all its vast settlements in the Indies."

Voltaire says, that no less than 50,000 families quitted France in the space of three years after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and were afterwards followed by others, who carried their arts, manufactures, and riches with them into foreign countries. Thus France lost about 500,000 inhabitants, an immense quantity of specie, and, what is still more, the arts, with which their enemies enriched themselves. Holland gained officers and soldiers. The prince of Orange, and the duke of Savoy, had three regiments of French refugees †.

No state ever suffered more in its constitution and

* Nor should it be left unnoticed, that numerous *catholics*, especially priests, suffered death, for an adherence to their religion, in the reign of queen Elizabeth.—*Ed.*

† See the reference, supra, p. 33, Note *.—*Ed.*

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administration by the influence of religion, than the empire of Constantinople for some centuries before its final dissolution. The monks interfered with all public business; and public business was often shamefully neglected for the sake of religion. The emperors would be presiding in councils, where the idlest of all controversies were discussed, instead of consulting about affairs of state in their cabinet, or being at the head of their armies in the field. They were at one time so far sunk in superstition, that it was proposed to Constantine *Le Barbu* to take his two brothers to reign along with him, in imitation of the Trinity.

These evils, and particularly those arising from persecution, ought certainly to be taken into the account when we make an estimate of the benefits accruing to the world from Christianity. The most illustrious examples of toleration are certainly not to be found among Christians. Mahometans in general are much more generous in their sentiments on that head, notwithstanding their religion was indebted, for its first propagation and extensive spread, chiefly to the sword. But this difference is owing to the greater attachment which Christians have to their religion, and their belief of the importance of the tenets of it. If Jenghis Khan and Timur Bek tolerated all religions by public edicts, which is certainly much to their honour, it must be considered that they were men who payed little regard to religion themselves, and thought the various modes of it to be a matter of very little importance to the world. All the people in the East, except the Mahometans, believe all religions to be in themselves indifferent.

The religion of the Gentoos is the most tolerant of any. They think that a diversity of worship is agree-

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able to the God of the universe, and they refuse to admit or make any converts. With all their religious horror at the killing of an ox, they have no aversion to others who do it.

The Mahometans, though they do not persecute to death, yet conceive the greatest abhorrence of other religions. It is early inculcated on their children, who are taught to call unbelievers by the most opprobrious names*. "Take the most miserable Turk", says sir James Porter†, "dependent on a Christian, one who lives by him, and would starve without him; let the Christian require of him the salute of peace, the *Salem Alek*, or 'Peace be with you,' he would sooner die than give it. He would think himself abominated by God.—The utmost they dare say, and many of them think it saying too much, is *Chair olla*, 'Good be with you'."

It is not, however, doing this argument justice to suppose that there was nothing like persecution among the ancients. Laws against external superstition were of old standing, and very severe among the Romans, though, in general, they were not rigorously executed. Immediately after the conquest of Gaul, they forbad any of the natives, under pain of death, to be initiated into the religion of the *Druids*. In Greece, too, a conformity to the established religion, and even a respect for the most ridiculous traditions belonging to it (such as the magistrates themselves, in the enlightened ages of Greece, cannot be supposed to have believed) were enforced by severe civil penalties. Stilpo was banished by the council of Areopagus for affirming that the Minerva in the citadel was not a divinity, but the workmanship of Phidias the sculptor.

* This representation scarcely agrees with the *generosity* which the author has just attributed to Mahometans.—*Ed.*

† *Observations*, vol. i. p. 15.

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It is observable in the history of persecution, that it is always the most violent between sects which are the most nearly related. The greater is their agreement, the more striking are the few points in which they differ; and the more do those parties which approach near, and yet cannot unite, interfere with one another. In Persia, all religions are tolerated except the sect of *Omar*. The Jews were spared in queen Mary's persecution of the protestants, and are to this day tolerated in Rome, and many popish countries.

A persecution that is tolerably moderate, either in time or degree, is certainly favourable to the growth of any religion; according to the old maxim, that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church:" but the small number of protestants in Spain and Portugal, since the erection of the inquisition, proves beyond all doubt that long and great hardships are capable of exterminating a religion. However, in general, as Voltaire says, politicians would find that the surest method of exterminating religion is by rewards, and not by punishments,—to make men forget it, and not to think of it.

In all governments, I believe, advantage has been taken of the general regard to religion, to enforce the obligation of truth; men being required to make a solemn *appeal to God*, or other invisible powers, with an implied imprecation upon themselves if they falsified. This practice may have suited pretty well with a barbarous and superstitious age, but it is now found to be attended with many inconveniences. Oaths are so multiplied in some countries, and required in cases in which the temptation to violate them is so great, that the reverence due to them is much declined, and with that a respect for religion and morality in general, which makes the oath itself of little effect; so that the

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interests, both of religion and of government, are injured by this connexion.

Much better were it for civil governments to content themselves with enforcing the obligation of truth by such penalties as are used on other occasions, and to punish all false affirmations before a magistrate as they now do perjury. But in many cases there can be no occasion to compel any person to make a declaration respecting himself, or his conduct; as it might be sufficient to punish him when it could be proved that he was guilty of any violation of the laws*. Oaths of allegiance are unnecessary when the punishment of treason is severe, and the courts of justice are open to accusations.

In this country we lose the benefit of the solemn affirmation of the quakers in criminal cases, when no man would doubt the value of it.

The oaths taken by kings at their inauguration are as inconvenient, and therefore as improper, as those that are administered to the subjects; and, like other persons, sovereigns have had recourse to very lame expedients in order to evade them. The kings of France, at their coronation, swear to exterminate heretics †. But though Louis XIII. and XIV. took this

* See these opinions ably maintained in "An Essay on Truths of Importance to Mankind, wherein the Doctrine of Oaths, as relative to religious and civil Government, is impartially considered. Translated from the German of M. Herport, a divine of Berne." 1768.—*Ed.*

† "M. Turgot," says Condorcet, "proposoit de changer la formule du serment du sacre. Il trouvoit que dans celle qui est en usage, le roi promettoit trop à son clergé, et trop peu à sa nation; qu'il y juroit d'exterminer les hérétiques; serment qu'il ne pourroit tenir sans commettre le crime de violer les droits de la conscience, les loix de la raison et celles de l'humanité; serment que Louis XIII. et Louis XIV. avoient été obligés d'éluder, en publiant dans une Déclaration, qu'ils n'entendoient point y comprendre les *protestants*, c'est-à-dire, les seuls hérétiques qui fussent dans leurs états." *Vie de M. Turgot*, p. 128. See *Decisions Royales sur les principales Difficultés de l'Edict de Nantes*. 1659. Paris. p. 204.—*Ed.*

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oath, they declared that it did not include the protestants, though they were the only heretics in the kingdom *.

In considering the advantages or disadvantages of religion in a state, the suitableness of the mode of religion to the form of government should be attended to. A religion which has no visible head agrees best with that spirit of liberty and independence which prevails in the north of Europe; though the maxim of king James, *No Bishop no King*, is by no means universally true. Superstition is rather favourable to monarchical power. But enthusiasm is observed to be an enemy to all power, in the hands either of civil magistrates or ecclesiastical persons. The independents joined the deists in favour of a republic during the civil wars in England; and the quakers, the most enthusiastic of all the sects that ever arose among Christians, have no priests at all, and are likewise thought to favour an equal republic.

The enormous rise of the papal power is an amazing example of the encroachments of the ecclesiastical upon the civil authority, and furnishes a warning to all civil magistrates to keep a watchful eye upon so insidious and dangerous a rival. The rise, progress, and declension of this power make a most important and interesting object of attention for many centuries. And this is so far from being foreign to civil history, that it is the principal and almost the only subject of it. A little before the Reformation, the clergy had engrossed a very large proportion of the lands of all Christian countries; and the popes, chiefly by means of the various fraternities of monks in every kingdom, who were immediately dependent upon them-

* *Life of M. Turgot*, p. 182.

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selves, had often equal power, even in temporal things, with the lawful sovereign, and sometimes superior.

LECTURE LVII.

THE care which civil governors have thought themselves bound to take of the interest of religion, though it has been productive of some good, has been the source of much and lasting evil in states. Naturally there can be no more connexion between *civil government* and *religion*, than between the former and any thing else that depends upon *opinion*, less than the business of philosophy, or medicine. Because these respect the present life, with which civil governors have to do; whereas religion respects the life to come, with which they have nothing do to*.

Civil governors in general are so educated, that it cannot be supposed they can be able to decide concerning religious truth, or be the best judges who are qualified to decide concerning it†. But the principal sufferer by this alliance between the church and the state is religion itself; that is, the members of society, as professors of religion, and deriving advantages

* See Locke's *Letter concerning Toleration*, where, *ad init.*, he concludes from satisfactory premises, "that all the power of civil government relates only to men's civil interests; is confined to the care of the things of this world; and hath nothing to do with the world to come."—*Ed.*

† It may be said that though the king and the members of parliament be not themselves theologians, they can call in the assistance of those who are. But by what lights must they judge who are the most proper to advise them? "The science of another," says the ingenious author of the Life of M. Turgot, "may assist our knowledge; but can never supply the want of it. For it is impossible to judge rightly through another, of that of which we cannot judge by ourselves." If any religion be already established, the governors of a country will of course advise with the friends of it, and others who are interested in its support. But they will never in this way be led to reform any great abuses.

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from it. For when it is thus guarded by the state, if it be faulty, or want reformation, it must long continue so. The professors of it, being interested in its support, will do every thing in their power to prevent any alteration, though it should be ever so much wanted.

Accordingly, it was never known that any reformation of Christian establishments arose from the body of the clergy; but their whole weight was always opposed to it. Single persons, having conceived ideas of reformation, have recommended their opinions to others, and thus by degrees the great body of the common people have been gained over; and at length the civil governors have found the call for reformation so loud, that they have thought it prudent to comply with it. The clergy have then turned with the court, and have become (as from their interest it might be expected they would) as zealous for the new state of things as they had been for the old.

These facts are too evident to be denied; and yet the interest of the clergy, arising from their emoluments, and that of the magistrate, arising from his wish to keep things quiet, and also the interest that many of the laity have in the support of ecclesiastical establishments, which is various and complicated, still blind the minds of many, and contribute to keep things as they are, in the most enlightened countries in Europe.

It is alleged in favour of these establishments, that religion has an influence on the conduct of men in this life. No doubt it has, as it connects the hopes of a future life with good behaviour in this. But this is done in all sects of Christians, and as much in those which are reprobated by the state, as those which are encouraged by it. Besides, if this was the true cause of attachment to Christian establishments, the friends

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under a government pretending to justice and even to liberality, is barely credible. Yet ever since the Reformation, the members of the church of England have kept possession of the tithes of the whole island, when they have long despaired of bringing the people over to that religion for which they pay so dear.

The most equitable establishment of Christianity (which is far from wanting any such support) would be to oblige every person to pay a certain proportion of his income to the maintenance of it, but leave it to himself to determine the mode, and to let his contribution be given to that minister whom he approves. This has long been the custom in some parts of North America*, and no inconvenience whatever has arisen from it.

But the chief inconvenience which is to be expected from these civil establishments of Christianity, will be found when the reformation of abuses in them can be deferred no longer. What convulsions in states were produced at the time of the Reformation, from the obstinacy of the court of Rome, and their refusing to alter any thing, though the abuses were ever so manifest! In these cases so many interests are involved, that though all may wish for some change, they may not be able to agree where to begin. Happy would a sensible minister of state think himself, if he could get rid of such an incumbrance; but he may not know how to do it. And thus the evil which in the progress of knowledge will every day become more manifest, and which must in the end be redressed, is continued from year to year, till that which might have been done by degrees, and without violence, must be done at once, and with violence. For the consequences of this

* In New England. See Dr. Price's *Discourse*, April 25, 1787. pp. 19, 20.—*Ed.*

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the rigid abettors of such establishments are answerable.

The mode by which Christianity is supported in this and some other countries, viz. by *tithes*, or a tenth part of the fruits of the ground, is peculiarly burthensome to the country, and in other respects highly inexpedient. Considering that the clergy do not contribute to the expence of raising the produce, the tenth is in some cases half the value of an estate. The farmer, or the proprietor of the land, knowing that he must pay so great a proportion of his produce, is discouraged from expensive culture, naturally grudging the benefit which another must derive from it.

Upon the rents of rich lands, the tithes, Dr. Smith says *, may sometimes be a tax of no more than one-fifth part, or four shillings in the pound; whereas upon that of poorer lands it may sometimes be a tax of one-half, or of ten shillings in the pound.

We are told in the Life of M. Turgot, that in France the clergy enjoy near one-fifth part of the property of the kingdom.

On the other hand, in 1755 the whole revenue of the church of Scotland, including their glebe, or church lands, and the rents of their dwelling-houses, amounted only to 68,514 pounds; so that, Dr. Smith says, the whole expence of the church, including occasional buildings and repairs, cannot well be supposed to exceed 80,000 or 85,000 pounds a year; and he says the most opulent church in Christendom does not better maintain the uniformity of faith, the fervour of devotion, the spirit of order, regularity, and austere morals, in the great body of the people, than this very poorly endowed church. He likewise says, that the greater

* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 275.

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part of the protestant churches in Switzerland, which in general are not better endowed than the church of Scotland, produce these effects in a still higher degree*. I will venture, however, to add, that all these effects, as far as they are desirable, are produced in a yet higher degree in the congregations of dissenters in this country, who have no establishment at all, besides being attended with other advantages which are necessarily excluded by establishments. I mean particularly the gradual and easy progress of truth, and the spread of rational religion.

To the whole state, tithes might be a kind of tax not extremely inconvenient, as, together with having an interest in the improvement of the country, it would be able to give effectual attention to the business, and promote it; whereas clergymen, though interested in the payment of the tithes, can seldom do any thing towards promoting the raising of the produce that must supply them.

Also, differences between the clergy and the people are the unavoidable consequence of this mode of supporting religion, and this must greatly lessen the influence of their instructions. In Holland the ministers are paid from the funds of the state. This the English clergy object to, as liable to become of less value by the sinking of the value of money. But if this should be found insufficient, their salaries may from time to time be augmented; and what greater security for their maintenance *ought* the clergy to require, than that of those taxes, from which all other officers, civil and military, receive their wages?

As the clergy are a body that never dies, their accumulation of wealth ought to be checked by statutes

* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 236.

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of mortmain. In Castile the clergy have seized every thing; but in Arragon, where there is something like an act of mortmain, they have acquired little; and in France less still.

Rich establishments of religion are by no means peculiar to Christianity. There are more bonzes of *Tao-see*, and of *Lama*, in Peking, than there are ecclesiastics and monks in Paris. There are more than 6000 bonzeries in the city and district of Peking alone, and many of these buildings in China are richer and more magnificent than the most celebrated abbeys in Europe*. There could not be less than a million of priests in the empire of Mexico†.

Philosophy, and the various modes and tenets of it, are not to be wholly overlooked, while we are attending to those things which have an influence upon the happiness of society. The power of philosophy, though by no means equal to that of religion, has yet, in many instances, appeared to be very considerable. The Indian philosophers choosing to throw themselves into the fire as the universal purifier, instead of dying a natural death; and Calanus, agreeable to their customs, burning himself with great composure in the presence of Alexander the Great; may perhaps be ascribed to religious considerations, and certain expectations after death. The same may perhaps also be said of the effects of the doctrine of *Metempsychosis*, which is given by Montesquieu as the reason why there are few murders in India, and also for the remarkable care which is observable in the same people for the ox, a creature very necessary in that country, and which multiplies very slowly there.

But nothing can be more certain than that a taste

* *Mémoires sur les Chinois*, vol. iv. p. 317.
† *Clavigero*, vol. i. p. 270.

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for philosophy, and science of any kind, tends to soften and humanize the temper, by providing the mind with other and more agreeable objects of pursuit than the gratification of the grosser appetites. It is this which in all ages has distinguished civilized nations from those which are uncivilized, and must certainly be allowed to put in a just claim, along with the Christian religion, for a share in producing the superior humanity of modern times. In China it had for many ages produced nearly the same effect, without any foreign aid. All the ancients, Plato, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Plutarch, and Polybius, represent music as absolutely necessary in a state. The states of Greece, disdaining mechanic arts, and employed in wrestling and martial exercises, would have been absolutely fierce and brutal without something of that nature to soften the mind. The fine arts serve as a medium between scientifical speculation and bodily exercises and gratifications.

Philosophy entered not a little into the secret springs and causes of action in some very critical periods of the Grecian, and particularly of the Roman history, by influencing the temper and conduct of some of the principal actors in those times. It is probable that if Brutus had not been a Stoic, he would not have entered so unfeelingly into the conspiracy against Cæsar, his benefactor. The Stoic philosophy made men despise life, and disposed them to kill themselves. The disgrace of being triumphed over made Cato and Brutus easily prefer death to it, as more consistent with their dignity and honour.

"By this philosophy," says Montesquieu, "are made excellent citizens, great men, and great emperors. Where," says he, "shall we find such men as the Antonines?" In their time the Stoic philosophy prevailed much at Rome. On the contrary, the Epicurean phi-

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losophy contributed much to corrupt the morals, and break the manly spirit of the Romans. Fabricius hearing Cyneas discoursing about this philosophy at the table of king Pyrrhus, cried out, May our enemies have those notions.

LECTURE LVIII.

We have now been taking a view of the principal circumstances which contribute to the flourishing and happy state of society; I come in the next place to direct your attention to those objects which tend to make a nation *populous*.

The most important observation upon this subject is, that the state the most favourable to populousness is that in which there is a concurrence of those circumstances which render a nation *happy*. All living creatures abound most in those places in which they can find the most plentiful and easy subsistence. And, for the same reason, where men are governed by good and equal laws, in which agriculture, commerce, and the arts, are favoured, and by the exercise of which they can get an easy subsistence, they are encouraged to enter into those connexions which are favourable to the propagation of their species. This is the reason why infant colonies generally increase so much faster than their mother country.

Besides, foreigners, and particularly ingenious foreigners, will flock to those countries which are well governed, and where they can easily maintain themselves and their families. And this inlet to a multitude of inhabitants ought by no means to be slighted by a wise magistracy, but ought to be encouraged, by making naturalization as easy as possible; though it

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be acknowledged to be more desirable to see a people increase from themselves, by the sole influence of a good internal constitution, without the aid of foreign resources. The attachment of natives to a country may be more depended upon than that of foreigners, who may be as easily induced to leave us as they were to come among us.

If a people live upon the produce of their own soil (and it is not perhaps desirable for a country to be more populous than that would admit of), they will be able to subsist in greater numbers if they consume the produce themselves, than if they live upon cattle, which consume the produce first; that is, more will subsist by mere agriculture than by grazing: and more will subsist by grazing (that is, by promoting the growth of vegetables, in order to feed tame cattle) than could subsist upon wild cattle roaming at large, in a country upon which no cultivation is bestowed. Accordingly, we find that those parts of North America in which the inhabitants live chiefly by hunting are very thinly peopled.

These circumstances may be so much depended upon, that if we only know the manner of life of any ancient or modern people, we cannot be very far imposed upon by accounts of their populousness. Thus we can never think that the northern parts of Germany were near so populous in ancient times as they are at present, though they no longer send forth those swarms of people upon the southern parts of Europe, which made them be called the *northern hive*, when we have the testimony of all antiquity that the country was almost one continued wood, and that the people lived chiefly by feeding cattle; or if they did live in part upon vegetables, it is allowed that the knowledge of agriculture was very low, and therefore they could raise but little from the ground in comparison of what

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the inhabitants do now. Nor is it possible to believe there ever should have been four millions of people in Cuba, the greatest part of whom the Spaniards are said to have massacred, when the face of the country never had the appearance of being sufficiently cultivated for that purpose.

In a country fully peopled, as few horses, or other beasts of burthen, will be used as possible; because, if the labour can be done by men, there will be so many that it will be worth their while to do it rather than want subsistence. By this means the population of any country may be prodigiously increased, as more land is wanted to maintain a horse than a man. In China, men may be said to have almost eaten out the horses, so that it is customary to be carried along the high roads to the greatest distances by men. The ingenuity of men also enables them to do more labour by machines, and less by horses, continually.

Of vegetables, the cultivation of *rice* seems to be the most favourable to population. It employs a great number of men, and hardly any part of the work can be done by horses. It is said, however, that more still may subsist on potatoes. Hume says, that a country whose soil and climate are fitted for vines will be more populous than one which produces only corn; but then it ought to be considered that the people cannot live upon their vines. This case, therefore, ought to be regarded in the same light as that in which manufactures, trade, and commerce tend to make a country populous. They draw a great number of people together, to live in one place; but their subsistence must be brought from other places, and consequently be somewhat precarious, as being dependent upon those places. While both those places are under the same government, the inconvenience is nothing,—as that Middlesex

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should be more populous than any other county in England, and not able to maintain its inhabitants; but when they are under different governments, it is possible the inconvenience may some time or other be felt. Where the sea supplies people with food, they may subsist in the greatest numbers in any given space.

A nearly equal division of lands, and those divisions small, greatly favours population. In this case, a family will raise only necessaries, being obliged to make the most of their little spot of ground for their immediate subsistence. This circumstance contributed greatly to the extreme populousness of several of the Grecian republics, and of Rome in the earliest times. Where large portions of land are in the possession of a few, no more hands will be kept upon them than are sufficient to reap the produce. Moreover, that produce will consist very much of superfluities, which contribute little to real nourishment; or, which is much worse, will be exchanged for superfluities raised in other countries.

This is the only case in which machines,—as mills, ploughs, and all contrivances to facilitate the practice of husbandry, so as to get the same labour performed by fewer hands,—are hurtful to population. For by these helps a person of a large estate will be able to reap the full produce of his lands, with the expence of few men upon them.

But these machines, and this more perfect method of husbandry, is no evil to be complained of, if the produce of the lands, thus easily reaped, be disposed of to purchase superfluities raised at home; especially if those superfluities consist not of eatables: for then the lands yield their full produce in the necessaries of life, and all who subsist upon them live within the

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country. The only difference is, that whereas, in the former case, they were all husbandmen, and could not be fully employed (much fewer men than the produce is able to maintain being sufficient to reap it), they are now only in part husbandmen, and the rest artisans.

Besides, the fewer husbandmen are necessary, the more men may be spared for the arts and manufactures; and consequently the more may be spared, and with less inconvenience, for the defence of the state, in case of a necessary war. Not to say that the prospect of purchasing manufactures will be a motive with the husbandmen to exert themselves to the utmost, to raise the greatest crops, the sale of which will further promote the manufactures, and increase the number of manufacturers. In France, England, and most parts of Europe, half of the inhabitants live in cities, or pretty large towns; and perhaps above one-third of those who live in the country are artisans.

If these artisans, or manufacturers, can make more goods than the home consumption requires,—that is, more than the produce of their own country can purchase,—and they find a vent for these goods abroad, they will have wherewith to purchase the produce of other countries; and consequently their own country will be able to contain more inhabitants than it would otherwise have been. But then, for the reason given above, it may not perhaps be desirable for a country to grow so populous; though it is probable that no country in the world was ever in danger of being too populous on that account, except Holland; and China is perhaps more populous on other accounts.

Considering that the greater proportionable populousness of most modern states is owing to manufactures and trade, it is evident that countries may be expected to be populous in proportion to the industry of the in-

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habitants, and therefore that without an increase of industry it will be impossible to make a nation populous. Indeed, this maxim is equally true in a country where there are no manufactures, where the people live by agriculture only.

All ancient authors tell us that there was a perpetual and prodigious conflux of slaves, and indeed of people of all ranks, to Italy, from the remoter provinces of the Roman empire, particularly from Syria, Cilicia, Cappadocia, the lesser Asia, Thrace, and Egypt, and yet the number of people did not increase in Italy, but was continually diminishing; and writers account for it by their continual complaints of the decay of industry and agriculture. It is remarked by Don Geronimo de Ustariz, that the provinces of Spain which send most people to the Indies are the most populous, on account of their industry and riches.

When great quantities of land are in few hands, grazing, and inclosing the grounds for that purpose, is peculiarly prejudicial to a country in which there are no manufactures. For then a very few persons are sufficient to tend all the cattle that can live upon it; and consequently, if the produce of the land in cattle be not expended in purchasing manufactures raised at home, the country would be in a manner depopulated. To prevent the depopulation of England from this cause, frequent statutes were obliged to be made to prevent the inclosing of lands, in the former periods of the English history.

Much has been written on the subject of *large and small farms*, with respect to their being more or less favourable to population. In this country great numbers have been advocates for dividing farms, whereas the œconomists in France contend for uniting them. The question should be decided by considering which

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method is best adapted to raise the greatest quantity of food for men. Because, if that food be not exported, it must be consumed in the country, which implies, if it does not directly produce, a great number of persons to consume it, whether they be employed in agriculture, or not.

If the farms be so small, as that the occupiers can only get a scanty subsistence from them, both themselves and their farms will be impoverished; they will not be able to cultivate them to advantage, and of course they will yield less. Whereas the farmer who is at his ease, and has always something to spare, will lay it out in the higher cultivation of his farm, and thereby enable it to yield more every year. If, however, the consequence of enlarging farms be not raising food for men, but for cattle, more than are necessary to cultivate the ground to the most advantage; or if, not wanting subsistence himself, the proprietor leaves it waste, or uses it only for his amusement, in the form of a park or a forest, it had better be divided, because then a greater number of men will be subsisted by it.

When corn, or provisions of any kind, which are raised within a country, are exported, it is evident that there are not mouths at home to consume it, that the goods which are purchased by that corn are made elsewhere, and that if the materials and conveniences for those manufactures could be found at home, the manufacturer might live there. In this case sufficient skill and industry would increase the population of the country.

Many persons are alarmed for the population of a country in consequence of inclosing its *common lands*, as well as of the enlarging of farms in it. But if by this, or any other means, the ground is made more

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productive, and the produce be not exported, it must be consumed at home, and therefore be favourable to population. Common rights to large parcels of land are very injurious to culture, and consequently to population. The proprietors not being able to agree in any method of improving their common estate, prefer a small present advantage to the trouble and risk of aiming at more. The population of England suffers extremely from this source, great tracts of the best land lying uncultivated in rude pastures, which it is no person's interest even to clear from brambles and furze. An easy method of dividing this kind of property, and thereby encouraging the cultivation of waste land, would greatly increase the population of the country.

LECTURE LIX.

ALONG with industry, we may justly reckon *frugality* to be another means of making a nation populous. When people have acquired a taste for expensive living, they will not choose to take upon them the charge of a family, till they have acquired a fortune sufficient to maintain it in what they think a genteel manner. While this is the case only with a few, the evil is inconsiderable; but the same taste for expensive living will naturally spread to the lower ranks of the community, and produce a general disinclination to matrimony. This was the reason why there were so few marriages at Rome in the reign of Augustus, when there were comparatively but few persons of fortune married, notwithstanding married persons had great privileges, and those that were unmarried were subject to many civil disadvantages; and notwith-

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standing the emperor took every method he could think of to promote matrimony. This cause of depopulation begins very sensibly to affect this country, though the lower ranks of people, who by their situation in life have not been led to conceive a taste for expensive living, still multiply very fast. It is observable that opulent families, and especially those of the nobility, often become extinct.

A country will maintain more or fewer inhabitants according to their mode of living; one man being able to consume the produce of vastly more land and labour by living on food difficult to be raised, or by eating and drinking more than is necessary. Sir James Stuart says, he believes that "no annual produce of grain ever was so great in England, as to supply its inhabitants fifteen months, in that abundance with which they feed themselves in years of plenty; and that there never was a year of such scarcity, as that the lands of England did not produce greatly more than six months' subsistence, such as people are used to take in years of scarcity."*

The inequality of the ranks and fortunes of men tends to check population, and in some countries may for ever prevent its being considerable, provided the upper ranks have it in their power to prevent the combination of the lower, which might terminate in reducing the inequality. In this case, the demand for animal food, and other things which require a great quantity of land to raise it, may be so great, as to be made to encroach very much upon that which is appropriated to the maintenance of the poor. In such a country, therefore, there may be the extreme of luxury and the extreme of indigence at the same time. Some

* *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. pp. 110, 111.

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may not know how to spend their money, while others may not know how to get any.

It was the inequality of ranks, and luxury (the consequence of it), that in a great measure occasioned the depopulation of Italy in the time of the Roman empire. It was the number of country-seats with which these masters of the world covered their fertile lands, and their changing them into unproductive deserts. In the same manner William II. converted a large and populous part of this country into a forest.

There have been many reasons given for the extreme populousness of China, but it seems chiefly to arise from this one circumstance, that the expences attending a married state are very inconsiderable. A wife can put her husband but to a very moderate expence. He is to allow her a certain quantity of rice for food, and some raw cotton, or other materials, which she must work up for her clothing; while a mat to sit on is almost all the furniture of the house. Thus no person is discouraged from marrying, and the consequence is a most amazing population.

Where matrimony, in opposition to the promiscuous use of women, is not encouraged, it is evident, from the most undoubted facts, that neither a numerous, a healthy, or in any respects a valuable offspring can be expected. Polygamy is likewise unfavourable to populousness. If one man have several wives, several men must be without wives; and if that man be impotent, the offspring of several men is lost to the nation.

Suppose a country, by its situation and the industry of its inhabitants, to be capable of maintaining a certain number of people; if, by any accident, that number be diminished, as this diminution leaves a greater encouragement to population, their numbers will soon

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be supplied. Thus plagues and devastations of all kinds are never known to have more than a temporary effect, unless they leave a country altered with respect to a spirit of industry, or some other circumstances necessary to the support of their numbers. For this reason, the number of men taken off by war does not make a nation less populous than it would have been without war, if war did not in other respects affect population. The nations of Africa, from which such a number of slaves are sent annually to America, are not less populous for that vent; and were that drain to be cut off, the internal state of the country remaining the same in other respects, it would likewise in a few years be the same with respect to the number of inhabitants. They would no more find themselves incommoded by being overstocked than they had done before. In short, mankind, like any other produce, will increase, or decrease, in proportion to the demand there is for them.

Monasteries and nunneries might be considered exactly in the same light, were it not that they consume those products of the ground which might have maintained the same or a greater number of useful members of society. But as the case is, perhaps those countries in which they abound would not be any gainer by suppressing them, unless that event should contribute to the increase of the national industry; for a nobleman upon the same estate would have kept as many menial servants, who are likewise a burthen upon society, and whose labour contributes little to the good of it.

The religious sentiments of a people are far from being a circumstance of indifference with respect to the populousness of a country. No wonder the Jews

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always multiplied, and still do multiply very fast; when, besides the reproach, and, as they believe, the curse, of being childless among them, many of them think that, for any thing they can tell, the Messiah may be born of them.

The religions of the Ghebres, Chinese, and Mahometans favour marriage. The sacred books of the ancient Persians declare that children make a bridge at the day of judgment, and that those who have none cannot pass to the state of the blessed. Even the opinion of the lawfulness of exposing children seems to favour the populousness of China. For many persons may be induced to enter into marriage with a prospect of exposing their children, which yet natural affection (the strength of which they were not aware of) will not allow them to do, while there is any possibility of maintaining them, for which they will exert their industry to the utmost.

It is peculiarly unfortunate when religious and philosophical sentiments discourage matrimony. Philosophy first annexed the idea of *perfection* to a single life, mistaken notions of Christianity confirmed that opinion, and the great Justinian was so far misled by it, that, instead of giving rewards to those who had a great number of children (which had ever been the wise policy of his predecessors in the empire), he granted privileges to those who never married. The same notion prevailing in catholic countries is, no doubt, one reason why they are not so populous as protestant ones; for, besides the monks and nuns, the whole body of the clergy live unmarried.

Mr. Hume has written a very elaborate and ingenious dissertation upon the populousness of ancient nations, endeavouring to prove that there are few parts

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of the world which are not more populous now than they were formerly*. It should seem, by applying the maxims above laid down, that Palestine, Asia Minor, and Greece were much more populous than they are now; but hardly any other country: and it is certain that all the western parts of Europe had few inhabitants in ancient times in comparison of what they have at present. Upon the whole, it cannot be doubted but that the world is growing still more populous than ever; especially considering the increase of industry and arts, the improvements in agriculture, and the increase of the European colonies in America.

The extreme of population is far from being desirable. Subsistence being scarce, the competition for it in the lower ranks of the people will be excessive. They will work for a trifle, and live upon any thing that will afford nourishment; and though they propagate, their offspring must starve and perish. "The accounts of all travellers agree," says Dr. Smith †, "in the low wages of labour, and in the difficulty which a labourer finds in bringing up a family, in China. If by digging the ground a whole day he can get what will purchase a small quantity of rice in the evening, he is contented." The condition of artificers is, if possible, still worse. Instead of waiting indolently in their work-houses for the calls of their customers, as in Europe, they are continually running about the streets with the tools of their respective trades, offering their service, and as it were begging employment. The poverty of the lower ranks of the people in China far

* See *Political Discourses*, No. X. Mr. Hume's opinion is controverted in the Appendix to *A Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind in antient and modern Times: in which the superior Populousness of Antiquity is maintained.* 1753, (and a late edition) by Dr. Wallace.—*Ed.*

† *Wealth of Nations*, vol. i. p. 108.

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surpasses that of the most beggarly nations in Europe. In the neighbourhood of Canton many hundreds, it is commonly said many thousand families, have no habitation on the land, but live constantly in fishing-boats upon the rivers and canals. The subsistence which they find there is so scanty, that they are eager to fish up the nastiest garbage thrown overboard from any European ship. Any carrion, the carcase of a dead dog, or cat, for example, though half putrid, is as welcome to them as the most wholesome food to the people of other countries. Marriage is encouraged in China, not by the profitableness of children, but by the liberty of destroying them. In all great towns several are every night exposed in the streets, or drowned like puppies in the water. The performance of this horrid office is even said to be the avowed business by which some people earn their subsistence.

Our manufacturing poor do not in many places rear many children; and Dr. Smith says*, that he has been told it is not uncommon in the highlands of Scotland for a mother who has borne twenty children not to have two alive. The industrious poor exhaust themselves by extreme labour, and like over-wrought cattle bring on untimely old age. "A carpenter in London, and in some other places," says Dr. Smith†," is not supposed to last in his utmost vigour above eight years."

The population of China is so great, that the superstitious respect for ancestors has been obliged to give way to it. The ordinary sepulchres are levelled, and the ground cultivated. The rich bury in mountains and barren lands. This excessive population, the inconveniences of which modern philosophers in Europe have no idea of, increases the demand for agriculture

* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. i. p. 120. † Ibid. vol. i. p. 124.

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so much, as to make a famine the sudden and inevitable consequence of the smallest neglects, and to compel the Chinese to live without oxen, sheep, or horses. Without mountains and marshes, China would be left without wood or game. For want of manure, the fields require much more labour*. The greatest attention is requisite on the part of government to provide for the equal distribution of corn, and to make one province and one year relieve another.

It may not be improper, in order to assist you in your computations on this subject, just to mention two facts which, I believe, may be pretty nearly depended upon. The first is, that there are more men than women born in almost every country, in the proportion of fourteen to thirteen, or of fifteen to fourteen; allowance, as it were, being made by Divine Providence for the greater consumption of men by war and other accidents, to which women are not exposed; also that the number of men capable of bearing arms are about one-fourth of all the inhabitants. The second is, that we shall come very near the number of the inhabitants of any town, if we multiply the annual number of their dead taken at a medium by thirty; or as some say, the number of births by thirty-four (but I think it ought to be larger in proportion), and the number of houses by five.

The number of deaths in proportion to the number of inhabitants differs exceedingly in different places. Dr. Price, after giving more attention to this subject than perhaps any other person ever did, thinks that, in great towns, it is from one-nineteenth or one-twentieth to one twenty-third or a twenty-fourth; in moderate towns, from one twenty-third to one twenty-eighth; but

* *Mémoires sur les Chinois*, vol. iv. p. 391.

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in the country, from one thirty-fifth, or one fortieth, to a fiftieth or a sixtieth*.

LECTURE LX.

After considering those things and circumstances which tend to make a nation *rich*, *happy*, and *populous*, we are naturally led to attend to those things which make it *secure*. Indeed, without the persuasion of our *security*, it is impossible to derive any advantage from the most favourable concurrence of those circumstances which tend to render a nation rich, populous, and happy.

A reasonable security can only arise from a consciousness of being able effectually to defend ourselves in case of any attack from a foreign state, or to make any nation repent of the insults they shall offer us. This power in a people of defending themselves, or of annoying others, must depend principally upon three things: a natural situation, which may be of great consequence either for defending ourselves, or of attacking others; skill in the art of war; and courage to exert that skill to advantage.

A natural rampart is either the sea, or a chain of mountains, the passes of which require but few troops to defend them against a multitude. Barrier towns and fortifications are artificial ramparts, and require a knowledge of the art of war to be serviceable. Islands afford the most effectual security that nature can provide for a people, if they be skilled in navigation and sea engagements, which, from their constant and necessary use of the sea, they have the greatest chance and op-

* *Observations on Reversionary Payments*, vol. i. p. 302.

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portunity of excelling in, provided they keep up any intercourse with neighbouring nations, and particularly if they carry on any foreign commerce. Had Tyre been situated on an island farther from the shore, it is probable it would never have been finally conquered by Alexander the Great; and had there been any passage from France to England by land, we might have been much more distressed in some of our wars with the French, in which they appeared to be superior to us by land.

The Swiss have been more than once indebted to their mountains for the security and liberty which they enjoy. Holland was delivered from the invasion of Louis XIV. by nothing but the opportunity which their situation gave them of deluging their country; and the natural division of Europe into tracts of a moderate extent, both mark out, as it were, the limits of empires, and is a means of keeping them within reasonable bounds; thereby giving us a kind of security against the establishment of any large empire in this part of the world: whereas in Asia, which abounds in extensive plains, nothing but a superior military force can prevent an army which has subdued a part from taking possession of the whole. Asia is therefore thought to be favourable to extensive monarchy. Even Tartary affords no place of retreat to a vanquished army.

If the situation of a people will not afford them a sufficient security (and it can hardly ever be quite sufficient of itself), they must have recours to those methods of defence and attack which are either equal or superior to those of the enemy.

The single article of *weapons* is of prodigious consequence in war, and has decided the fate of many important battles. The Romans acknowledged them-

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selves to be inferior to the Cimbri in courage and martial heroism, and that even their superior discipline would have been no security against the dreadful impetuosity of their attacks, but that the swords of the Cimbri were of bad temper. They often bent at the first stroke, and the person who used one of them was obliged to wait till he could straighten it with his foot before he could make a second stroke. The expertness of the English in the use of their long and cross bows gave them a great advantage both over the Scotch and the French before the invention of artillery. The cavalry of the Romans and Huns were skilled in the use of the bow, while those of the Goths and Vandals used the sword and lance. To this difference Belisarius attributed part of his success.

It was a great advantage to the Romans that they were never bigotedly attached to their own weapons and manner of fighting, but easily changed them when they saw any advantage in those of other nations. Thus Romulus exchanged the Argive buckler for the large shield of the Sabines; and the Romans changed their method of arming their horse when they conquered Greece. The same just sentiments taught them the proper use of their auxiliaries, whom they employed according to their character. It was the Numidian cavalry that gained the battle of Zama. Hannibal too had the good sense to arm his troops after the Roman manner, when he found it was preferable to the armour of his own country. And it was no inconsiderable cause of the decline of the Roman power, that they quitted their ancient armour. Under Gratian, the Romans laid aside the use of their heavy armour, their coats of mail and helmet. They likewise ceased to fortify their camp.

The single discovery of the composition and force

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of *gunpowder* has made a total alteration in the whole system of war, and has contributed to make battles both less bloody, and more quickly decided than before. Formerly armies were drawn up generally sixteen or twenty, sometimes fifty, men deep, with a narrow front, because their ranks would have been too apt to have been thrown into disorder by fighting hand to hand. But the consequence of this was, that the troops which gave way were entangled with one another, and had little power of making their escape. Besides, their conquerors were necessarily close behind them, and massacred them at pleasure, as they were incapable of making any resistance the moment after they had turned their backs. Whereas thin and extended ranks are able to keep their order in the present method of fighting; and, as the opposite armies are at some distance, the party which begins to be worsted is able to make its retreat in good order, with less help from a body of reserve, to keep the enemy in play, or over-awed, which was the only method by which the ancients could secure an orderly retreat. In short, as Hume well observes, nations, by the use of artillery, have been brought more upon a level, conquests have become less frequent and rapid, success in war has been reduced merely to a matter of calculation; and a nation overmatched by its enemies either yields to their demands, or secures itself by alliances against their violence and invasion.

When we read of the astonishing success of a few Spaniards in America, where five hundred men under Cortez subdued the vast empire of Mexico by the help of gunpowder only, we are apt to wonder that the æra of its invention and its use in war should not have been noted by contemporary historians, and that the Germans, who invented it, should not have de-

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rived some signal advantage from it. But the reason was, that the discovery doth not appear to have been any secret. The composition itself and its more innocent effects were probably well known, and its possible uses in war generally talked of, before it was actually applied to that destructive purpose; which would tend greatly to take off the surprise which would otherwise have been felt upon the first introduction of it. Besides, the first artillery was so clumsy, and of such difficult management, that mankind were not immediately sensible of its use and efficacy; and considering how many arrows might be drawn before one piece could have been loaded and discharged, especially before the invention of gun-locks, it is rather to be wondered that guns and cannons should ever have come into use at all. The Chinese were acquainted with the composition of gunpowder, but never thought of making any use of it in war. Match-locks were used so late as in the civil wars in England, above three centuries after the invention of gunpowder. Before the time of Louis XIV. little use was made of cannon in besieging or defending places, fortification was in its infancy, and spears and short guns were then in use as well as swords, which are now entirely laid aside; and some time before that period, viz. at the battle of Lepanto, in the year 1571, they fought promiscuously with arrows, long javelins, grenadoes, grapling-irons, cannons, musquets, spears, and sabres.

The alteration of the methods of *fortification*, and the manner of attacking and defending fortified places, in consequence of the discovery of gunpowder, is even more considerable than the alteration it has introduced into the methods of fighting in the open field. Sea-engagements are likewise now quite a different thing

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from what they were before this great discovery. Instead of the ships of war themselves being the principal weapons of offence, and being pushed against one another by their beaks; and instead of the men fighting heavy armed as on land, whenever they had an opportunity of grappling; the ship is now nothing but a fortified place of security, which the men assail with their artillery, as if it were a castle on land.

Superiority of *discipline* is an excellent second to superiority in point of weapons. Exact discipline makes a multitude act as one man, and gives each man the courage of a multitude. For every single soldier who helps to compose a body whose motions are so uniform and regular, has the same entire confidence in the strength of the whole, as if he himself had the sole direction of that strength. Discipline chiefly rendered the Greeks so much better soldiers than the Persians, and the Romans than the Greeks, the Carthaginians, and the fierce barbarous nations of the North. Some of the soldiers of Niger, driven by the proscriptions of Severus among the Parthians, taught them the Roman discipline, which, it is said, ever after gave them an advantage over the Romans. "The Parthians have not more courage than we have," said Belisarius, in a speech to his men: "they are only better disciplined than we are."

It is discipline only which gives the Europeans the superiority they as yet retain over the Asiatics and the American nations, now the Europeans have communicated to them the use of artillery; a conduct, the reverse of the wise policy of Charlemagne, who forbade, under the severest penalties, that any persons should sell arms to the Saxons, with whom he was frequently at war.

So much superior is the military skill of civilized

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and wealthy nations at this day, that they have nothing to apprehend, as they formerly had, from the ferocity of their barbarous neighbours. On the contrary, if they were so disposed, they might subdue them and extirpate them with as much ease as they could clear any country of lions and other wild beasts.

We ought not to forget the maxim, verified by all history, that a nation which has often been conquered, and consequently which has often seen what it was that gave their enemies the advantage they had over them, have at length acquired knowledge, discipline, and courage, sufficient to beat their conquerors. Thus Peter the Great was at length able to beat the Swedes, though he had no other masters in the art of war than the Swedes themselves; and the lessons he received from them were so many dreadful defeats in the beginning of the war he had with them.

The discipline of the European armies is prodigiously improved since the disuse of the feudal militia, when all armies were raised by the prince's summoning his vassals to appear in the field, at the head of their dependents, who were maintained a certain number of days at his expence; and when this vassal was their commander, of course, whether he was properly qualified for the command or not.

In those times, too, the kings, who were originally nothing more than generals, always headed their armies in person. Charles, the son of king John of France, seems to have fixed it as a maxim, never to appear at the head of his army; and he was the first king in Europe who showed the advantage of policy, foresight, and judgment, above a rash and precipitate valour. The inconvenience of kings commanding in person had often been severely felt by the nation before the custom was disused. To pay for the king's

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ransom was one of the three occasions on which only it was lawful to impose a tax in the feudal times.

Nations are powerful and formidable in proportion as their mode of subsistence enables them to maintain discipline in the army, and keep them in the field. People who live by hunting, as the North American Indians, can never subsist in great numbers. They therefore fight in small parties, and endeavour to attack their enemies by surprise. Nations that live by pasturage, as the Tartars, can drive their cattle along with them if they march into a fertile country; and every man can appear in the field, and sometimes even the women can join them. These, therefore, are the most formidable invaders. But in case of a defeat, they have no resource, their all is at stake; and being incumbered with much baggage they must be open to attacks.

Nations which live in towns, by manufactures and commerce, are in general unqualified to fight, themselves; but being rich, they can afford to pay those who are able, either of their own country, or of other nations; and those who have no other business besides that of fighting will improve in the art of it. Their armies will seldom be very large, but they will be less incumbered, and upon the whole far more effectual for defence or offence. But experience will teach them that, though able to make conquests, these will never repay them the expences they are at in acquiring and maintaining them. For of all luxuries (as every thing which is not *necessary* for life may be called) war is the dearest.

If a wealthy nation does not keep a standing army, such as is described above, but obliges every citizen to learn the use of arms, and appear in the field whenever he is called upon, it is said to have a *militia*.

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On such a plan the liberties of a country are certainly safer; but the fighting men, not making war their whole business, will not be very expert in it, and consequently will not have that confidence in themselves that a standing army has. Though, fighting for their liberties, they will be stimulated to act with more vigour.

The first standing army we read of was that of Philip of Macedon, and by this means chiefly he was superior to the states of Greece, whose armies consisted of militia; and still more to the Persians. In the beginning of the second Punic war, Hannibal had a proper standing army, and the Romans only a militia; but it was otherwise before the end of that war.

The greatest care should be taken that the officers in standing armies be of the body of the people, so as to have the same interest with them, and that their civil privileges should be more valuable to them than any thing that they could get as soldiers.

A militia has the advantage of training more men to the use of arms, and of preserving the people independent; but if these ends could be secured by any other means, the country would be defended at less expence by a standing army: for the same reasons that we have our shoes and clothes made at less expence by employing shoemakers and taylors, whose sole business it is to make shoes and clothes, than we should if every man were taught to make them himself. If it was a man's whole business to learn the use of arms, he would certainly be more perfect in the use of them; and though this soldier would be idle and useless for any other purpose, the occasional practice of arms by the whole community would produce a greater sum of idleness, and on the whole would take more from the mass of useful labour.

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Since the increase of industry, and the imposition of taxes in lieu of the ancient feudal services, standing armies, constantly exercised, and commanded by officers of the king's nomination, have been kept up by all the princes in Europe; and as there is a provision in the state for the constant pay of these troops, the difference between the expences of a time of war and a time of peace is not so great as formerly, though our armies are infinitely more expensive. It is the price of artillery, fortification, &c., which exhausts the revenues of the present belligerent powers. The necessary expences of war, as it is conducted at present, have given rise to a maxim unknown to antiquity, that *riches are the sinews of war*.

Louis XIV. was the first who kept on foot numerous armies. His example excited other princes to do the same; so that after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle the Christian powers of Europe had about a million of men under arms. The inconvenience of standing armies commanded by officers of the king's nomination is, that too much power is thrown into the hands of the sovereign.

It is owing to the great improvements in exercise and discipline that a nation makes so great a figure in arms, and appears so formidable to its neighbours immediately after the conclusion of a civil war. Though it leaves the nation exhausted in other respects, it leaves a great number of men trained to the use of arms, and averse to any other method of getting subsistence. The Romans were extending their conquests on all sides, even in the fiercest of their civil wars. Those in the minority of Louis XIV. formed a number of generals, who raised the glory of that reign to the highest pitch; and England had never appeared

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so formidable to the rest of Europe as it did under the Commonwealth, immediately after the conclusion of the last civil war. There are undoubtedly more men in a nation before the commencemect of a civil war; but the strength of a nation is not in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, but to the number of the fighting men it contains, which are much increased by a war, which depopulates the country in general.

This accounts for the great military power of ancient nations. An European prince who has a million of subjects cannot maintain more than ten thousand troops; whereas the fighting men in ancient republics were nearly as one to eight of all the inhabitants. Hence, in all ancient history, we read of the smallest republics raising, and maintaining, greater armies than states consisting of many times the number of inhabitants are able to support at present. It is generally said that, in the present state of things, even wealthy societies cannot keep more than an hundredth part of their fighting men in the field, and maintain them in the character of soldiers.

In ancient times few artisans were maintained by the labour of the farmer, and therefore more soldiers might be supported by the produce of the lands. Livy says, it would be difficult in his days to raise so large an army as the Roman state formerly sent out against the Gauls and Latins. The numbers and private riches of the Athenians are said, by all ancient writers, to have been no greater at the beginning of the Peloponnesian than they were at the beginning of the Macedonian war; but in the latter period they were grown more luxurious, and more people were employed about the arts. The Dutch are, no doubt, richer now than they were in the time of our wars with them, but they

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have not the tenth part of the power they had then. With them, indeed, this is not perhaps so much owing to the increase of luxury, as to a want of that public spirit which converts private riches into public riches, and national power.

This, too, accounts for the large armies of the ancient Gauls and Germans. With them, and all people of the north-western parts of Europe, no profession was honourable but that of arms. Agriculture and the arts were ever accounted ignoble and base, unworthy of a man free born. Of course, every man studied the use of arms; and the consequence was a state of perpetual war, and a body of people full of courage and experience in it.

A nation may be very populous, and either be very weak, or very strong, in consequence of that populousness. If the greatest number of people be employed in raising the necessaries of life, no men can be spared; and they cannot bear the expence of a long war. But if the full produce of the lands be reaped with ease, and the bulk of the people be artisans, these, being employed about superfluities, may be spared upon any emergence; and while hands enow are left to follow husbandry, the country, yielding as much as before, will soon recruit itself for the losses it sustained in war. But when the ambition of a prince takes men from their farms, and the lands are left uncultivated, the very sinews of riches and strength are cut. After this neglect of husbandry, the land will not maintain the same number of inhabitants, and the country will require a long course of time before it grow as populous and powerful as it was before.

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LECTURE LXI.

It is at this day not only a confidence in the number of their own warlike inhabitants that gives a people the idea of security. A sense of common advantage has connected all the states of Europe in *alliances* with one another; so that the weakest cannot be attacked but some of the stronger powers see it their interest to enter either as allies, or as principals, into the war; and for a century or two, there has hardly been a particular war in Europe (wherever, or upon whatever occasion, it might happen to arise) which has not very soon become general: whereas, in ancient times, a nation might almost be subdued before its next neighbours knew any thing of the matter. The Greeks and Persians seem to have understood what we call the balance of power, but the Romans never met with any general combinations against them. The confederacies in Gaul and Britain were very partial.

It has been the rivalship and opposition between the two houses of Bourbon and Austria which has made this subject so much attended to in Europe; it being apparently the interest of all neighbouring states to oppose the stronger, and more enterprising of the two, by joining themselves as allies to the weaker. The quickness with which an alarm is taken at the ambitious enterprises of any European monarch would have been incredible in ancient times. "Louis XIV." says Voltaire, "entered Holland only in May, and by the month of July all Europe was in a confederacy against him."

It may not be amiss in this place just to mention the conduct and policy of different nations in extending and securing their *conquests*. It was the custom

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of the kings of Assyria, of Babylon, and all the ancient empires in the East (for preventing the rebellion of people newly conquered), to captivate and transplant the people of different countries into one another's lands, and to intermix them variously. The Romans observed a policy something like it; the troops which guarded one province being always raised in another and a distant one, so that no person was permitted to bear arms in his own country.

A few more particulars of the Roman policy in war deserve our notice. In early times the command of every general expired with his consular or pro-consular year, so that they were obliged to exert themselves greatly, in order to distinguish themselves in the short period of their command; and thereby the soldiers also (who were then persons of property) got no attachment to the general, but to the state. Afterwards, when, on account of distant wars, it was found inconvenient to change the general, the soldiers (who were then more needy, and received their pay from the general) were always at his devotion, whoever he was, and were ready to second his ambitious views in all the civil wars with which they were harassed. Under the emperors, the generals were afraid of giving umbrage by distinguishing themselves, and therefore we are not to be surprised that the Roman empire received so little addition after the end of the commonwealth.

Another maxim of their policy in war was to deprive all conquered nations of power, making them deliver up their arms and ships, and forbidding them to make war upon any of their allies. They took hostages of their princes' children, and secured their conquests by not seeming to take possession of the conquered countries at first, but leaving the people their own laws, customs, and government. But thereby their

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kings, or chiefs, and consequently the whole people, were, in fact, more at their devotion than if they had been nominally the subjects of the empire. They also strengthened their own power by easily granting the freedom of their city to particular persons, towns, and states; thereby incorporating the conquered nations into their own body, and making them consider the interest of Rome as their own. By this policy they increased in numbers and strength by their conquests*. Whereas the states of Greece (in which the freedom of cities was difficult to be obtained) were necessarily diminished in numbers and strength by the wars in which they were engaged.

Though the Romans exacted very little under the form of *tribute* from the conquered nations, they are said to have been the only people in the world who grew rich by their conquests; so that every war made them more able to undertake a second. Pompey increased the revenues of the state one-third.

The best discipline, and the best maxims of war, will avail but little without bodily strength and personal *courage*. I shall therefore make a few observations upon the different sources of it. It is obvious to remark, in the first place, that men will always exert their strength in proportion to the motives they have to exert it. We may, therefore, expect more courage in freemen, fighting for their liberty, than in the subjects of an arbitrary monarch, fighting for the honour of their master. It was an enthusiastic love of liberty that inspired the Greeks in their wars with the Persians, and that enabled the Dutch to rescue themselves from the power

* Mr. Colden attributes this policy to "the five Indian Nations:" when "they have subdued any people, after they have satiated their revenge by some cruel examples, they adopt the rest of their captives; who, if they behave well, become equally esteemed with their own people." *History of the Five Nations*, p. 5.—*Ed.*

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of Spain, when they were the most inconsiderable, and the Spaniards the most formidable, power in Europe.

If we read of more instances of desperate valour among the ancients,—as of men killing themselves, their wives, and their children, rather than fall into the hands of an enemy; as the Saguntines, the Numantines, the people of Smyrna, and many others are said to have done,—we must consider, that more was lost by being conquered in former times than at present. In those times a conquered people lost their civil liberty, goods, wives, children, and often even the rights of burial; whereas modern conquests generally terminate in leaving the conquered to live according to their own laws, and the private property of individuals is untouched. In short, the only difference to most of the inhabitants of a conquered country is, that they are obliged to swear allegiance to another sovereign; a great argument of the superiority of modern times in reason, religion, philosophy, and manners.

There was a capital difference in the regulation of armies in ancient and modern times, which could not be a matter of indifference with respect to the motives the soldiers had to exert themselves. With us the pay of an officer is prodigiously greater than that of a common soldier; whereas, in ancient times, if the generals had any pay, it was little more than what the meanest person in the army received. When Xenophon returned from his famous expedition, he hired himself and six thousand of his Greeks into the service of Seuthes, a prince of Thrace, upon these terms—that each soldier should receive a daric a month, each captain two darics, and he himself, as general, four.

The commander in chief of a Roman army, at least during the Commonwealth, had no regular pay. All the advantage he received was the honour, the power,

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and the influence, which his command gave him at home. What we may call the perquisites of his office, when any spoils were taken, could not regularly be considerable, for the questor took an account of the whole, in order to its being lodged in the public treasury. There were fewer officers in the Roman armies than in ours, and these officers had very small pay. A centurion had only double the pay of a common soldier; and it must be remembered that the Roman soldiers bought their own clothes, arms, tents, and baggage. Cæsar, however, gave the centurions ten times the gratuity that he gave the common soldiers.

The reason of this conduct in the Romans seems to have been, that in the early times, the body of the people, fighting their own battles, either in their own defence, or with a view to enrich themselves with the plunder of other people, had no pretence to claim any pay. Besides, as they served in their turns, it would have made no sort of difference, whether they provided themselves with necessaries for war, or were supplied out of a common stock, formed by their joint contributions. Afterwards, when it became inconvenient for the greater part of the people to serve in the army, on account of their being engaged in the arts and in agriculture; and consequently those were enlisted chiefly who had little or no employment, and were therefore very poor, it appeared unreasonable that they should fight for the common advantage, at their own expence, which they were so little able to afford. Upon this they were allowed some pay, but at first it was extremely small; as may be imagined, after being used to serve for nothing at all. Still the officers served without pay, and never received any thing considerable till it became the interest of their commanders to court their favour by increasing their allowance. Till

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Julius Cæsar doubled the legionary pay, a common foot soldier received only two oboli a day, the inferior officers and centurions four oboli, and a horseman a drachma.

The history of the pay of European soldiers, and particularly of the English, is very different from that of these ancients. In the early feudal times, as all lands were held by military tenure, every vassal sent horse and foot in proportion to the lands he held; and none bore arms but freemen, who must have been handsomely provided for if they were retained in the service beyond the stipulated time. Also, they did not fight their own battles, as the Roman soldiers did in the early times of the Commonwealth. Whatever advantage was gained by the war, it was entirely at the disposal of the chief in the expedition. Indeed, before the establishment of the strict feudal system, the soldiers had no pay; but then they fought for lands, to be divided equally among them all; and there was no superiority of one man to another, but what was temporary and ceased with the war. But when this army of freemen became fixed in a conquered country, the inhabitants of which were vastly more numerous than themselves, and they were obliged to keep up the form and order of a perpetual army, the superiority of the commanders, both supreme and subordinate, became fixed, and the ordinary freemen were as much under the command of their superiors as they had been when they were their officers in the time of actual service.

Besides, when the great vassals grew almost independent, their services must have been bought at a considerable price; and they often stipulated not only for a handsome reward for themselves, but also for each of their followers. In the time of Edward III.

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a knight, who served on horseback, had two shillings a day, which was equivalent to one pound at present; and an archer sixpence, which was equal to a crown at present.

The reduction of the value of money, and the reduction of the rank of the common soldiers, was a very suitable coincidence, as under the same name they always received pay in proportion to their rank and the value of their services. At the present time, soldiers are the very lowest, and worst provided for, of all the people,—generally those who are too idle to provide a better subsistence for themselves by their labour,—and their pay is according to it.

More officers are necessary in modern armies, because the method of fighting, since the invention of gunpowder, is more complex and more scientifical. And the commanders must have better pay, to make it worth the while of persons of proper rank and fortune (who have the greatest interest in the welfare of their country) to take it upon them. It is true, that the low rank and the low pay of our common soldiers allow them to be little more than mercenaries. Common soldiers have certainly very little at stake in the country; but the very profession of arms tends to inspire a sense of honour, and attachment to the country, though they have little or no interest in it. This is remarkably the case with the English soldiers and seamen.

Professed mercenaries, it is certain, can have no motive to fight for one side but what may be converted to engage them in the service of the other; and the history of all nations demonstrates how impolitic it is to depend upon them. Thus the Persians depended upon the mercenary Greeks, their natural enemies, till they had no other troops capable of doing them any service; and the Carthaginians were brought to the

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very brink of destruction by the rebellion of their mercenaries, between the first and second Punic wars. At present, while all the states of Europe keep up a considerable body of native troops, the inconvenience is less sensible. Those who are the most remarkable for serving as mercenaries at present are the Swiss, and the petty princes of Germany.

But even depending upon mercenaries is a better expedient than buying off a war. For that is, in fact, to confide in the honour of an enemy confessedly superior. The Romans were not long able to withstand the ravages of the barbarous nations, after they began to bribe them to quit their territories. And the money which the Danes received from the English on the same account, only induced them to rise continually in their demands, and bring over new bodies of adventurers, with the same expectation of raising fortunes without fighting.

LECTURE LXII.

SKILL in the art of war will avail little without a soldiery capable of bearing the necessary fatigues of it. The Roman discipline was admirable in this respect. The Roman soldiers were kept in constant exercise. The Lacedæmonian soldiers had less fatigue in the field than they had at home; whereas ours pass from comparative indolence to extreme exercise. Distempers in armies are for this reason more common and more fatal with us, than we ever hear of their being with them. Few Roman soldiers died of distempers: but this is by many ascribed to their use of woollen garments next their skin. The military pace was twenty miles in five hours, carrying sixty pounds. The sol-

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diers were also exercised in running and leaping in their arms. Indeed, as the nature of the modern service, in which artillery is principally used, is less laborious, and therefore less depends upon strength of body, such severe exercise seems not to be necessary.

It is this circumstance of hardiness and capacity of bearing fatigue which gives poor nations the advantage they sometimes have over the rich. Besides, the prospect they have of bettering their circumstances acts more forcibly upon them than even the fear of a reverse of fortune does upon the rich. These circumstances, in concurrence with the more robust make of body in the northern nations, have generally directed the course of victory southwards. Persia, it is said, has been conquered thirteen times from the north; and the Saracens are the only nation situated considerably to the south who have made extensive conquests northwards. At the time that the Romans made their conquests northwards, they were as hardy as the Gauls and Germans themselves, with the advantage of superior discipline and better weapons.

Invaders are generally observed to have more courage than the people invaded: it being supposed that no nation would take up a resolution to invade another, and particularly the desperate resolution of attacking them at home, without great confidence, and therefore great probability of success. This apprehension cannot but make the people invaded diffident of themselves, which must give their enemies a considerable advantage. The Romans seldom gave their enemies an opportunity of attacking them, but generally carried the war into their country; and Hannibal's great maxim was, that people were no where vulnerable but at home.

Mere current *opinion*, without any foundation in the

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world, is of great moment with respect to courage. The tenth legion of Cæsar, and the regiment of Picardy in France, imagined themselves, and really were, the best troops in the service. The Dorians were ever reputed better soldiers than the Ionians, and actually were so in consequence of it. Indeed, when once a character has been acquired, men will exert themselves uncommonly to support it.

The five nations of North America thought themselves by far superior to the rest of mankind, and took such care to impress the same opinion on all their neighbours, that they, on all occasions, yielded the most submissive obedience to them. When one of a different tribe cried out *A Mohawk!* they would fly like sheep before wolves, without making any resistance, whatever advantage there was on their side *.

Of what moment *religious sentiments* are in war, has been shown under the article of religion: I shall only add, in this place, that the knights errant, who did such excellent service in the war with the Moors in Spain, had their valour, no doubt, greatly inflamed by watching their arms a whole night before the shrine of the Virgin Mary, in the ceremony of receiving knighthood; and that the soldiers will be more easily kept in good discipline when notions of religion attach them to their general and their cause, especially if their religion oblige them to great strictness and severity of manners in private life. The superstitious regard which the Romans had for the authority of their generals was extreme. Several times they suffered themselves to be decimated by them; whereas the Carthaginian soldiers more than once crucified their generals. It was the excellent discipline which the seriousness of the parliamentary army in this country in-

* Colden's *History of the Five Nations*, p. 3.

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ured them to, that gave them so great an advantage over the king's troops, whose dissoluteness of morals as men greatly relaxed their discipline as soldiers.

Violent personal hatred has always produced the greatest and most dreadful effects in war. This principle accounts for the peculiar savageness with which civil wars are often conducted. Resentment is inflamed in proportion to the nearness of the cause, and the frequency of impressions from it. For this reason but little hatred is excited against a public and distant enemy, and therefore those wars are conducted with more generosity and humanity. But civil and religious parties have this in common,—that their antipathy to one another is always the greater, the more things there are in which they agree: for this makes the contrast of the few things in which they differ, the more sensible and striking. A remarkable instance of the effects of this animosity is mentioned by Voltaire: A cavalier commanded a regiment of French refugees at the battle of Almanza, where they met with another French regiment in the opposite army; as soon as they saw one another they began a bloody fight with their bayonets, without firing a single musquet, and there were not above three hundred men left alive out of the two regiments. Civil wars are also peculiarly bloody, because less quarter is expected in them. All prisoners are sure to be treated as *rebels;* whereas in open wars, at least in modern times, all prisoners are mutually exchanged.

Factions, which are the foundation of civil wars, take their rise from very different sources. Their real causes are *interest* or *affection*, though these are seldom avowed, *principle* being the pretence in almost all cases. The factions in the Roman commonwealth were a struggle for power between the two orders of

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the state; and they were a great means of contributing to its aggrandizement. For the senate had no method of silencing the clamours of the common people but by leading them out to war, which was a bait that was almost always sure to take with them.

Affection divided England between the houses of York and Lancaster, as also Scotland between Bruce and Baliol. But this affection, as Hume well observes, is only in the lower people, who see not the princes. The great partizans are led by interest chiefly. They see the weakness of princes, and despise them. These motives, however, for entering into factions, different as they may be in their own nature, easily introduce one another. The attachment of a court party to the monarch naturally becomes attachment to monarchy, and *vice versa*.

Factions subsist long after the original motives have ceased to actuate both parties. The real difference between the Guelf and the Ghibeline factions was long over in Italy before the factions themselves were extinct.

Factions are observed to rise more easily and propagate faster in free governments, where they always affect the legislature itself. The reason is, that the people have more influence in free governments, and are therefore more jealous of the conduct of their governors.

Upon the whole, the greatest number of factions are probably owing to personal or local reasons. All the factions in despotic states are necessarily personal, as the people are sure to be governed in the very same manner, whoever be their prince. In several of the civil wars of the Romans, the soldiers fought more for their commander than for the cause. Such wars are generally terminated by the death of the commander.

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In more modern times, and even in freer governments, we find that the Neri and the Bianchi of Florence, the Fregosi and Adorni of Genoa, the Colonesi and Orsini of modern Rome, were all chiefly personal factions.

From whatever cause factions arise, their effects are often lasting and dreadful. The tribes Pollia and Papiria always voted on opposite sides for near three hundred years. The Prasini and Veneti (founded on the difference of colour in the livery of the combatants at the public games) never ceased their animosities till they had nearly ruined the Greek empire. In the year 1327, most of the great houses in Ireland were divided one against another; the Giraldines, the Butlers, and Breminghams on one side, and the Bourcs and Poers on the other. The ground of the quarrel was no other, but that the lord Arnold Poer had called the earl of Kildare a rimer. This quarrel was prosecuted with such malice, that the counties of Waterford and Kilkenny were destroyed with fire and sword.

But never was a state so unfortunate with respect to factions as the Greek empire. The several parties at Constantinople, whenever they invited the Turks to come and assist them, always stipulated that they should take into captivity all they should meet with of the opposite party. Indeed, it was religion which gave the chief stimulus to their mutual animosity. No people had ever a greater aversion to heretics than the Greeks. Several of their lawful emperors were perfectly odious on that account; and the imperial family itself was often divided in their sentiments. Thus, when Justinian persecuted those who did not favour the council of Chalcedon, the empress opposed it.

It is observed that nations which have arrived at great power and extensive empire by slow degrees, have not often fallen but by the same slow degrees;

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whereas conquests made with rapidity have generally been lost as quickly as they were gained. Thus the Theban power was born and died with one man, Epaminondas; and the Macedonian power with two men, Philip and Alexander. Whereas the Roman empire, which required seven hundred years to establish it, required as many to destroy it. There are, however, many exceptions to this observation. If there be any truth in it, it seems to be owing to this,—that when conquests are made gradually, the conquerors have time to fall upon the best methods of securing them, and also because, before the last conquests are made, the people who were first conquered consider themselves as the conquerors of the rest, being intimately incorporated with those who subdued them. Whereas, when large conquests are made at once, the empire becomes unwieldy by its own greatness, the conquerors do not immediately hit upon the best methods of securing their conquests, and all the conquered states, seeing themselves at once in the same situation, perceiving their interest to be the same, and at the same time perceiving their own strength, and the comparative weakness of their conquerors, easily join to assert their liberty.

In the rude and ferocious state of mankind in former ages, some nations enriched themselves by conquering others; as by this means they came at once into the possession of all their stock of wealth, and made slaves of their persons. But with less labour, and far less risk, though with a little more patience, they might have got richer at home, without the trouble of acquiring and watching so many slaves. There was, however, a present advantage in the system when it was successful; and it gratified the pride of a nation to have at their mercy other great and distant nations.

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This last advantage, if it be any, is still gained by foreign conquests, but perhaps hardly any other. As the humanity of modern manners leaves the inhabitants of a conquered country in the possession of their private property, the only advantage that can accrue from conquering a nation is the direction of its force for the purpose of other conquests, the appropriation of its taxes, and the controul of its commerce. As the taxes will seldom do much more than defray the expences of government, the direction of its commerce is now considered as the chief article of emolument. But when the expence of conquering and keeping such distant countries is taken into the account, the greater cheapness of the commodities of such countries and the monopoly of their commerce will go but a little way to pay the balance.

It may be said that a nation must be stronger by the addition of the power of foreign dominions. But in proportion as any nation becomes powerful, it excites the jealousy of other nations, and thereby has much more powerful enemies to contend with; and if the liberty of commerce can be obtained (which does not seem to be difficult in the present state of the world), and the stock of a nation consequently increase, without the expence of conquering and keeping foreign dominions, that great surplus of wealth will purchase more assistance in war than could in general be furnished by any conquered nation or colony; and it might be better applied for the purpose of *self-defence*, which is the only justifiable use of arms. Had England nothing to do with the East or West Indies, America, or Gibraltar, it would have fewer wars, and would, no doubt, be much more wealthy (as its industry would, by one means or other, find a market); and if it was invaded, would have much greater resources

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for defending itself. Also, if it was thought proper to enter into an alliance with other nations, in order to support a common army or navy, it would find greater resources for that purpose, as well as for others.

No war is justifiable except that which is necessary to the preservation of a state, that is, a defensive war. Motives of honour and dignity are never sufficient. Good conduct and generosity alone can assert the true honour of men and of nations. And it no more becomes a great nation, than it does a great and good man, to revenge a mere affront. If motives of honour and dignity be attended to by statesmen, they will involve nations in as many foolish and destructive quarrels as the same notions involve those individuals in who are addicted to duelling.

The object of war is the destruction of the enemy, at least of his power, so as to disable him from doing that mischief to prevent which the war was engaged in. But every method of distressing an enemy is not deemed honourable or right. A regard to public opinion, therefore, ought to regulate the ravages of war, because it is for the common interest of mankind that they should be observed. As the world advances in civilization, and national animosity abates, war becomes less distressing to peaceable individuals who do not bear arms. It would not be extended much more, if, in time of war, commerce was permitted to pass free, so that no privateers should be allowed, and only ships of war by sea, and fortresses on land, should be exposed to danger. Next to having no wars at all, this rule would be the greatest common benefit.

One of the most barbarous and absurd customs which has arisen from the practice of war, joined to ancient superstition, is the modern *duelling*, which is so fashionable in many parts of Europe: for it is

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hardly known elsewhere, and was unknown to the ancients. It is a remarkable instance of the continuance of an *effect* after the *cause* hath ceased to operate. Nobody at this day imagines that single combat is a proper *appeal to God*, or that he who is in the right has any advantage in the combat over him that is in the wrong; yet a man thinking himself innocent and injured, and perhaps having a wife and family, will voluntarily expose his life to an equal risk with that of a man whom he despises as a nuisance to society, because he has been insulted by him. Good sense will surely teach the world at last, that insolence is best answered by contempt, and real injuries best redressed by public justice. The man who hath offended against the rules of good breeding will find a sufficient punishment in the neglect and disgrace which his behaviour will naturally bring upon him.

LECTURE LXIII.

An historian should give particular attention to the manner in which the expences of government are defrayed: for very much of the public happiness and tranquillity depends upon it, and many governments have been ruined by wrong methods of doing it. Either the *taxes* have been too great, have been laid upon improper things, or have been collected in an improper manner. And innumerable events show that the minutest things of this nature are of great importance.

Moderate taxes operate like a constant spur and obligation to labour, and thereby greatly contribute to the flourishing state of a people, particularly if they be

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laid on gradually. Then, the only consequence of taxes is, that the poor increase their industry, perform more work, and live as well as before, without demanding more for their labour. This is agreeable to what is constantly observed, that in years of scarcity, if it be not extreme, the poor labour more, and live better, than in years of plenty. Any other disadvantage which is an equal spur to labour hath the like effect.

Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Rhodes, Genoa, Venice, and Holland, all laboured under great natural disadvantages. It seems more reasonable to ascribe the indolence of mankind in hot countries to the general goodness of the soil in those countries, which, without labour, supplies them with the few things which are necessary to their subsistence, than to the heat of the climate; for wherever people can live without labour they are equally idle. No nation under the sun can be more indolent than the Irish have been, or than many of them are to this day; and sir William Temple attributes it to the goodness of the soil in Ireland, as he ascribes the riches of the Dutch to the badness of theirs.

On the other hand, exorbitant taxes, like extreme necessity, destroy industry, by engendering despair; and even before they reach that pitch they raise the price of labour and manufactures in commodities of all kinds. But a free state, in which there is every encouragement to industry, will better bear heavy taxes than a despotic government. How would the Turks bear the taxes which the Dutch pay? In England merchants in fact lend great sums to the state on the importation of their goods. Who would venture to do this in Turkey?

Taxes may be laid either upon what is *possessed*, or upon what is *consumed*. Taxes upon possessions are

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levied with little expence, but they have this disadvantage, that they require that every man's property be known. If the owners regulated it themselves, they would do it falsely; and if it was done by the inspection of officers, there would be a door open to all kinds of oppression and cruelty. In this case, however, it were unjust to tax a person according to his *property*. It ought to be according to his *superfluity*, or what he can spare from the expences which his station of life necessarily obliges him to.

The produce of no tax can be so easily ascertained as that of a *poll-tax*, and therefore in arbitrary governments recourse is often had to it. But in order to render it, in any tolerable degree, equal, and, if the amount be great, supportable, the people must be classed, and their circumstances known.

Taxes on consumption are, upon the whole, the most eligible, because in this case no man pays more than he chooses; and the conveniences he enjoys are an equivalent for what he pays. Taxes of this kind regulate and check themselves. For the increase of the imposition is not always found to be an increase in the revenue, since the dearness of a commodity lessens the consumption. In this case it is of great consequence that the seller pay the tax. He will make nothing of the expence, because he makes that addition to the price of his goods; and with the buyer, particularly after some time has elapsed since the imposition, it is confounded with the price of the commodity, and considered as part of it. Besides, if the buyer pay the tax, he is liable to be searched, which would be intolerable in a free state. This method, however, only deceives the people, making them ignorant of what they contribute to the expences of government. As the price of living is increased by all taxes on consump-

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tion, men must have more for their labour, and consequently their manufactures will come dearer to a foreign market.

Sir James Stuart supposes* that the best possible tax would be upon the *sale* of every commodity. But this would be a check on the transferring of property, which in a commercial state ought to be made as easy as possible; so that it seems better to have respect either to the *possession* or the *consumption* of commodities in the levying of all taxes.

The fewer particulars are liable to be inspected in a free state the better. This makes the *excise laws* severely felt in England. When duties are paid upon importation only, it is much the easiest for the country. With us, these taxes are called *customs*, and, as they are levied, are the most injudicious of all our taxes. They are a great temptation to smuggling and frauds of all kinds. The state never receives what it ought; and yet the fair trader, besides infinite trouble and vexation, pays more, in fees, to expedite his business, than the state requires.

If the wealth and strength of a nation depend chiefly upon its *manufactures*, it is impolitic to subject them to any tax. It ought to be laid upon the *property* acquired by them; because a tax on the manufacture itself discourages industry, and prevents the acquisition of that wealth which alone can pay the tax. If the tax be laid on any instrument employed in the manufacture, the manufacturer will be embarrassed in his art, and be reduced to inconvenient methods of avoiding it. And, in general, if he cannot go to work without thinking of the tax, and knowing that he pays it *as a manufacturer*, he will often choose to avoid a

* *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 593.

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present certain loss by abandoning the prospect of great future gain. Whereas when property, acquired by manufactures as well as in any other way, is taxed, the grievance is remote, and he knows that if ever he be subject to pay, he will be proportionably able to do it.

Many persons are of opinion that any country would best support the expences of government by laying all taxes on some one visible object, as land, or land and houses. The tax could not then be evaded; and though it might seem to affect only one object, it might in reality affect every article of consumption, because they would all, in some way or other, depend upon it. If the land alone be taxed, it must proportionably raise the price of every produce of the soil, as corn, cattle, materials for manufactures, &c., and consequently of *labour* in general, because the labourer must be fed and clothed from the produce of the ground; and the proprietor and farmer, by raising the price of their commodity in proportion, would feel no particular burthen. In this, as in every other case, the tax would ultimately be paid by the *consumer*, who would of course be the most able to pay, and would enjoy the value of it.

If all the taxes were laid on houses, or habitations of any kind, it would not be very difficult to make it affect all the inhabitants according to their property, because all persons must have houses, and in general would have them in proportion to their fortunes. If a few persons should content themselves with living in a disreputable manner, in order to avoid the tax, the loss to the state would not be very great. They must at least eat, drink, and be clothed, and the price of those necessaries will be raised by every possible mode of taxation.

To raise all taxes upon the *land*, or rather the nett

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produce of it, after the expences of culture are deducted, is the great maxim of the French œconomists. They say that the nett produce is the only real wealth that is annually re-produced; and that the only possible way of taxing this, in any regular proportion, is to levy the tax directly upon the produce. But the produce of land is so various, that this would make a very complex system, if it was made to affect all who should use the produce, and if any regard was paid to its being a necessary, or a superfluity; so that it will be found more expedient to lay the tax upon the property of which a man is possessed: and perhaps the only practicable method of doing this is to tax his *expenditure*, always laying the greatest burthen on articles that are least necessary. As to the wealth which persons hoard, it does not seem possible to come at it without great oppression; and it may be presumed that whatever is hoarded by one generation will be dissipated in the next.

All the taxes in China are laid upon the land. Nothing is demanded of the artisans or merchants*.

All taxes should affect men in proportion to their *property*, and not their *rank*, because it is their property only that enables them to pay taxes. To exempt certain classes of men, evidently more able to pay the tax than those who do pay it, fixes a mark of ignominy on those who pay. It gives them a constant feeling of their degradation, and excites envy towards their superiors, which cannot be productive of any good.

In England the nobility and the members of the house of commons have some personal privileges, but the taxes affect them as much as others. They have, indeed,

* *Mémoires sur les Chinois*, vol. iv. p. 305.

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the privilege of being exempt from the postage of letters; but it is on the idea of their correspondence having for its object the concerns of the public. If the members of parliament should venture to exempt themselves from any considerable tax, the country at large would not bear it.

Nothing can well be imagined more oppressive than the *taille* in France. It was levied directly upon men who, having nothing but their wages for their subsistence, without property, and without furniture, beyond their necessary utensils, could not even by violence itself be compelled to pay. Every collector (who is himself constrained to undertake to levy the tax) had a right to call upon the four persons in the district whose proportion of the taille was the greatest, to fill up all deficiencies. Though they might already have discharged their own share of the tax, they were compelled, by the sale of their effects, or even by imprisonment, to expiate the negligence of the collector, or the poverty of their countrymen*.

The ease of the country has been too little the object of those who have imposed taxes. They have not studied in what manner to proportion the burthen of them to the capacity of the people to bear it, but have only endeavoured to get as much as they could without exciting any dangerous commotions, or such a clamour as would make it impossible for them to keep their places. They have, therefore, too often spared the rich, whose union was easy and formidable, and have oppressed the poor, who were too numerous, and too much dispersed, to unite in great bodies, and whose complaints the prince seldom hears of.

When great numbers of persons are supported by

* *Life of M. Turgot*, p. 126.

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the revenues of a country, and are of course interested in the continuance of its burthens, the most upright ministers will find it difficult to afford it any relief. This was fully experienced by M. Turgot. All the indirect grants of former ministers were considered as so many *rights*, and many had transferred them as real property. The united claims of these persons, and intrigues, overpowered that great man*.

It is always preferable to tax luxuries, because this will not tend to raise the price of necessaries, and therefore will only affect those who can best afford to pay. But still, since many will be less able to pay the poor, whose labour supplied their luxury, these must lose their employment, or at least change it for one that may be less advantageous to them.

It is a maxim in all commercial states, that taxes be laid so as to favour the *exports* as much as possible, and to lay the chief burthen upon what is *imported*. This encourages an application to home-manufactures and navigation. Taxes upon foreign commodities oblige a people to apply them to themselves. This has been the happy effect of many taxes upon foreign manufactures in England, particularly upon German and Flemish linens; and the tax on French brandy has increased the sale of rum, and contributed to the support of the southern colonies. But it should be considered that this is taxing the whole community for the advantage of a part of it; and unless that part be necessary to the whole, their benefit may be purchased at too great a price. If more money be given for West India commodities, in the price that individuals pay for them to the planters, than they would do if the importation of them was free to all the world, it had been

* *Life of M. Turgot*, p. 189.

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better for the country at large if no such colonies had been known, except they should in some other manner add to the strength and wealth of the nation; and the expence of one war on their account will much more than overbalance any advantage of that kind.

Taxes are raised with the least trouble to the government by means of *farmers*, who advance the money as it is wanted. But as the farmers must necessarily have an opportunity of doing more than barely refunding themselves, and certainly will not do less, it is generally the most expensive method in the end, and soonest exhausts the people. Besides, it is always an odious method of taxation. The people cannot with any patience see the farmers growing rich at their expence. The establishment of farmers of the taxes was a great hurt to Rome. In a despotic state, where the taxes are paid to the king's officers, the people are infinitely more happy: witness Persia and China. The great abuses which arose from the system of taxation in France proceeded not from their number, or the weight of the taxes, but from the expensive, unequal, arbitrary, and intricate method of levying them; by which industry was discouraged, and agriculture rendered a beggarly and slavish employment.

In France, says sir James Stewart*, the collection of taxes costs the state no less than ten per cent; whereas in England the expence of collecting the excise, administered by commissioners, who act for the public, and not by farmers who act for themselves, does not cost more than five pounds twelve shillings and sixpence in the hundred.

* *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 512.

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LECTURE LXIV.

To augment the national supplies upon any particular emergency beyond their annual produce, it has been the practice of some states to anticipate their revenues, by borrowing sums of money on the credit of them. This *paper credit*, as it is called (from the circulation of the government securities upon paper, borrowed from the practice of merchants), is said to have had its origin in Florence, in the year 1324, and to have been brought into France from Italy after it had been suppressed by Henry IV.

Sir James Stewart gives the following more particular account of the origin and progress of national debts*. The Jews, banished from France on account of their extortion in the holy wars, fled into Lombardy, and there invented the use of *bills of exchange*, in order to draw their riches from countries to which they durst not resort to bring them off. Thus bills and promissory notes, in various forms, came to be used by all persons, and even by kings.

At first princes mortgaged their lands and principalities, in order to obtain a sum of money; acting upon the principle of private credit, before government acquired that stability which is necessary to establish a firm confidence. The second step was to raise money upon branches of the taxes assigned to the lender. But this method was attended with great abuse and oppression, and at length public credit assumed its present form. Money was borrowed upon determinate

* *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 353.

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or perpetual annuities, a fund was provided for that purpose, and the refunding of the capital was in many cases left in the option of government, but was never to be demandable by the creditor. Francis I. was the first who contracted a regular debt on a perpetual interest upon the town-house of Paris, at about eight per cent, when legal interest in England at the same time was ten per cent*. Voltaire says that Louis XIV. left a debt of about 180 millions sterling.

This custom of contracting national debts is quite contrary to the practice of antiquity, in which almost all states made provision of a public *treasure* in time of peace against the necessities of war; for want of which, war is now attended with the increase of taxes and the decay of commerce. But then the ancients had it not in their power to make use of expedients which nothing but the far greater security of property, and greater fidelity and honour, both in individuals and in public and private societies, than they ever knew, could make practicable. They either could not have borrowed at all, or upon such interest that the remedy would have instantly been intolerable. Whereas with us, though the future evils of borrowing may be great, they come on gradually and imperceptibly, so long as the interest of the borrowed money can be paid without much difficulty.

Credit was so low in France, and interest so high, that seven millions borrowed by the late king became a debt of thirty-two millions to the state †. "While the king of France paid exorbitant interest for the money advanced to him, and the emperor was known by the name of *Maximilian the Moneyless*, the Venetians

* Stewart's *Political Œconomy*, vol. i. p. 337. † *Ibid.* p. 472.

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raised whatever sums they pleased at the moderate premium of five in the hundred *."

It seems not very difficult briefly to point out the principal advantages and disadvantages attending these national debts. The capital advantage of them is, that they afford relief in great emergencies, and may thereby give a greater permanency to states, which in former times, for want of such great occasional resources, were liable to be overturned without remedy. And if the taxes necessary to pay the interest of these debts be not immoderate, they are, as was observed before, of no disservice to a nation upon the whole.

Some have represented the national debt as having the same operation with the addition of so much capital stock to the nation, encouraging the industry of it, &c. But whatever money is issued in the form of paper by the government, it is first deposited in the form of cash by the individual. The man who pays the tax gives up so much of his property, so that it ceases to be productive to him; and it is generally expended by government in army and navy expences, revenue of officers, gratuities, &c., which yield no return: it is like a man giving his son a sum of money which he expends in eating and drinking. The money, no doubt, is employed, and thereby industry is encouraged; but it is only that kind of industry which raises the price of consumable goods. If any man, or any nation, should give *all* their property in this manner, they would certainly be impoverished, though those to whom their money was transferred would be gainers.

Some persons have paradoxically maintained that there can be no inconvenience whatever attending any national debt; that by this means the price of every

* Robertson's *Charles V.* vol. i. p. 135.

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thing is indeed raised; but that this affecting all persons alike, they will be as well able to pay the advanced prices as they were the lower ones. The fallacy of this reasoning may perhaps be most easily exposed by the following state of the case.

Let us suppose a society to consist of a thousand labourers and a thousand persons just able to employ them. If this society be loaded with any debt, and consequently be obliged to pay a tax; since all the labourers must still subsist, and their employers can give them no more than they do, some of these must become labourers themselves, so that the price of this additional labour shall be equal to the amount of the tax. It is evident, therefore, that the whole power of the society will be exhausted when the thousand, who first employed the labourers, shall be all brought into the same state with them, and when the price of their labour shall be limited by the market to which it is brought. The tendency of a public debt, therefore, is to increase the quantity of labour in a country; and to a certain degree this may be favourable, by promoting industry, but when carried to an extreme, the country must be distressed.

So long as the labourers can raise the price of their labour, no tax can hurt *them*. If, for instance, each of them be obliged to pay one shilling a week, and their wages have been twelve, they must demand thirteen shillings; for their wages must be sufficient to subsist them. But when the wages they must absolutely have, in order to pay all the demands upon them, cannot be given, the process must cease.

We shall always deceive ourselves when we imagine that the case of a country is, in this respect, at all different from that of an individual, or of a number of individuals, and that though debts may ruin the latter,

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they will not hurt the former. The only difference is, that a state cannot be compelled to pay its debts. But when its credit is exhausted, it will not only be unable to contract any more debts, but may not have it in its power even to pay the interest of those already contracted; and in that case it must necessarily be exposed to all the inconveniences attending the numerous insolvencies which must be occasioned by its own. And if the insolvency of one great merchant, or banker, produce great distress in a country, how dreadful must be the consequence attending the insolvency of such a nation as England. It must be so extensive and complicated, as no politician can pretend to describe *a priori*.

The inconvenience of such a debt as the English have now contracted, and which they rather seem disposed to increase than diminish, is great, and may be fatal. If foreigners should become possessors of the greatest share of our funds, we are in fact tributary to them; and the difference is very little if they be natives,—for still the people are debtors to another body than themselves, though they may, in some respects, have the same interest. But the most we have to fear from the accumulation of the national debt will begin to be felt when the interest of it comes to be so great, that it cannot be defrayed by the taxes which the country is able to raise, and when, consequently, the monied people, notwithstanding their interest in keeping up the national credit, will not venture to lend any more. Then one of these two consequences must follow, which I shall introduce in the words of Mr. Hume. "When the new created funds for the expences of the year are not subscribed to, and raise not the money projected; at the same time that the nation is distressed by a foreign invasion, or the like, and the

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money is lying in the exchequer to discharge the interest of the old debt; the money must either be seized for the current service, and the debt be cancelled, by the violation of all national credit, or, for want of that money, the nation be enslaved."

What we have most to fear from the accumulation of our national debt is not perhaps a sudden bankruptcy, but the gradual diminution of the power of the state, in consequence of the increase of taxes, which discourage industry and make it difficult to vend our manufactures abroad. "The private revenue of the inhabitants of Great Britain," Dr. Smith says*, "is at present as much incumbered in time of peace, and their ability to accumulate as much impaired, as it would have been in the time of the most expensive war, had the pernicious system of funding never been. The practice of funding," he says, "has gradually enfeebled every state which has adopted it. The Italian republics seem to have begun it. Genoa and Venice, the only two remaining which can pretend to an independent existence, have both been enfeebled by it. Spain seems to have learned the practice from the Italian republics; and (its taxes being probably less judicious than theirs) it has, in proportion to its natural strength, been still more enfeebled. The debts of Spain are of very old standing. It was deeply in debt before the end of the 16th century, about an hundred years before England owed a shilling. France, notwithstanding its natural resources, languishes under an oppressive load of the same kind. The republic of the United Provinces is as much enfeebled by its debts as either Genoa or Venice. Is it likely then," he adds, "that in Great Britain alone a practice,

* *Wealth of Nations*, vol. iii. p. 528.

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which has either brought weakness or desolation into every other country, should prove altogether innocent?"

When debts have been contracted, and a fund appointed for paying the interest of them, it is generally contrived to be so ample, as to do something more than this, and the surplus is made a fund for *sinking*, or paying off, the debt; and is therefore called *a sinking fund*. And as discharging the debt discharges the interest of the debt at the same time, it necessarily operates in the manner of compound interest, and therefore will in time annihilate the debt. But the temptation to apply this sinking fund to other purposes is so great, that it has been of little use in any country.

To facilitate the payment of these debts, it is customary with some nations to borrow upon lives; viz. either to give the lender an annuity for his own life, or an annual sum to a number of persons, to expire with the last life. This last method is called a *tontine*. Both these methods have succeeded better in France than with us.

Mr. Postlethwaite makes an estimate of what taxes these kingdoms may be supposed to bear, in the following manner: People who live in plenty, as in England, may part with a tenth of their income; but so poor as Scotland and Ireland in general are, a twentieth to them would be as much as a tenth to the English. By which, considering the number of the people and their incomes, computed at a medium, he puts the amount of all that can be drawn from the three kingdoms annually at 8,375,000 pounds.

Experience has taught us that we are able to bear a much greater burthen than this, or than any person, even the most sanguine among us, had imagined we ever could bear; our national debt at present being

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about 240 millions*, the interest of which is 12 millions. However, without naming any particular sum, if the national debt should be raised so high that the taxes will not pay the interest of it, and at the same time defray the ordinary expences of government, one or other of the consequences above mentioned must ensue. And in the mean time our manufactures must be burthened, and consequently our ability to pay taxes must be diminished, by every addition to the national debt.

Instead of paying off any part of the national debt, some think it would be better, as soon as the produce of any tax would enable the state to do it, to take off some of the other more burthensome taxes, especially such as tend to check manufactures, and thereby to diminish the power of acquiring wealth. For if the country grow more wealthy, the debt, though nominally the same, becomes in reality less, in proportion to the greater ability to discharge it. Thus a person in a good way of trade does not always find it his interest to pay his debts, because he can employ that surplus by which he could discharge them to a better account. For it is possible that with an hundred pounds, by which he might have diminished his debts, he may have acquired a thousand.

It can hardly be expected, however, that ministers of state will have the magnanimity, or the judgment, to act upon this plan. Otherwise, by adding to some taxes (as those on land and houses, acquired by wealth), and diminishing those on manufactures, by which wealth is acquired, a nation might become so wealthy as that its debts would be of little consequence to it. But till mankind are cured of the expensive folly of

* At this time (A. D. 1803) the national debt of England is about 440 millions.—*Amer. Edit.*

It is now (1825) computed to be 800 millions.—*Ed.*

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going to war, it is not even desirable that nations should have any large surplus of wealth at the disposal of their governors, as it would be sure to be squandered in some mischievous project. Wise nations therefore, not being sure of a succession of wise governors, will be content to be just able to pay the interest of their debts, as the only security for peace, and indeed the only guard against destruction.

LECTURE LXV.

I HAVE now held forth to your view the grand objects of attention to every wise politician, and every sensible reader of history; namely, those things which tend to make a nation *happy*, *populous*, and *secure*, together with what relates to the expences of government; and have endeavoured, for your farther assistance, to point out the principal of their mutual connexions and influences. It would be endless to point out every useful object of attention to a reader of history, as there is no branch of useful knowledge which history will not furnish materials for illustrating and extending.

Modern mechanics have been improved by an acquaintance with what the ancients had executed in that way. Natural philosophy may yet receive great light from the accounts which many historians give of the natural history of different countries. The principles of astronomical calculation may be farther ascertained, and perfected, by means of the history of cœlestial appearances, such as eclipses and comets. And hints may with advantage be taken, from the accounts of diseases mentioned in history, to improve the science of medicine.

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Some changes which have taken place in the face of the earth justly challenge the attention of natural philosophers, particularly such as the abbé du Bos has made his observations upon. He is of opinion that Italy is warmer at present than it was in the times of the ancients; a remark which may be extended to other European climates, owing probably to the lands being cleared of wood, to the marshes being drained, and the country better peopled and cultivated. On the other hand, the northern parts of Europe appear to be colder than they were some centuries ago; and seas which were open formerly are not navigable now, on account of their being obstructed by ice.

It is worthy of notice, in this view, that when the form of government has destroyed a spirit of industry, the soil itself seems to become barren. Who, for instance, from seeing the present state of Egypt, Palestine, Asia Minor, some parts of Greece, Africa, or Sicily, would ever imagine that they had formerly been so fruitful as all history demonstrates them to have been? Time has also made a considerable alteration in the course of many great rivers. The course of the Rhine is quite changed from what it was formerly. The river Oxus no longer runs into the Caspian Sea. The sea has in many places gained upon the land, and in other places towns which were formerly seaports have now no advantage of that kind, the sea having removed to such a distance from them.

The hands of men have made many considerable alterations in the face of the earth. The Nile, it is said, once lost itself in the sands of Libya; the Iaxartes, which formerly separated the barbarous from the civilized nations of Asia, no more empties itself into any sea: its waters have been divided and dissipated by the Tartars. The draining of marshes, the clearing of

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woods, and the multitude of canals, in many countries, make the face of the earth assume a very different appearance; and the spirit for improvements of all kinds, which now prevails in many parts of the world, will no doubt, in time, produce farther changes, of which we have no idea; and the consequences of those changes may be what those who make them may least of all think of.

The only object of attention I shall endeavour to point out more particularly is *the knowledge of human nature*, which may be viewed in a variety of lights and to considerable advantage in the glass of history.

Experience and self-examination may assist us in adjusting the general theory of the human mind. But it is in history alone that we can see the strength of its powers, the connexion of its principles, and the variety to which individuals of the species are subject, together with many other particulars, equally curious and useful to be known, by a person who is desirous thoroughly to understand this very important and interesting subject.

An European would allow too little to the strength of imagination, and the influence of the mind upon the body, if he formed his judgment from facts within the compass of his own observation only. If he cannot travel, he must read Oriental history before he can be a competent judge of it. Among the people of the East, even convulsions are frequent at the bare recital of a story, or the delivery of a piece of eloquence. The utmost vehemence in action is quite natural to them. They express their sensations by cries, lifting up their arms, and the agitation of their whole bodies. And gestures which outgo every possible natural impulse, to a degree which with us would pass for ridiculous and mad, are not, with them, accounted extravagant.

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The Mahometan monks and dervises whirl themselves round in their ecstasies with inconceivable rapidity: they even receive their sultans with these convulsions. Also the tenderness of the Orientals for the living exceeds our benevolence, and we are as far short of them in our regards to the dead.

In this age of reason and philosophy we should be absolutely ignorant, without the help of history, how deplorably the best faculties of the human mind may be sunk and fettered by superstition. The minds of almost all the ancients were enslaved by it, to a degree of which very few of the moderns have any just conception. All the religion of the ancients, that of the learned Greeks and Romans least of all excepted, was superstition of the most absurd kind.

Some species of superstition rose even to a great height under the shelter of Christianity in barbarous ages. Never was the folly of witchcraft in so much credit as in the reign of Henry III. of France. A magician condemned to be burned, declared, on his examination, that there were above 30,000 of the same profession in France. In the year 1609, 600 sorcerers were condemned in the jurisdiction of the parliament of Bourdeaux, and most of them burned. The famous curate Lewis Gauffredi, burned at Aix in the year 1611, had publicly owned that he was a sorcerer, and the judges believed him*.

In some respects, history bids fairer for determining the connexion between different principles, dispositions, and situations of the human mind, than any reasoning *a priori*. Such is the observation of Montesquieu,

* He "was accused for debauching two young girls. They said he used magick to seduce them, and that he had made them witches. He confessed, then retracted, then was tortured again, and after that burnt at Aix." *Hutchinson on Witchcraft*, 1720, p. 46.—*Ed.*

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whether it be true or not, that persons very happy, or very miserable, are equally inclined to severity: witness monks and conquerors.

History also furnishes all that can be said upon the curious subject of *national characters*, whatever hypothesis we adopt with respect to them; whether we plead for the prevailing influence of climate, or the infection of example and the force of habits of long standing.

Those who plead for the influence of physical causes allege the indolence, the languor of body, and the speculative turn of mind which are generally observed in people of southern climates, together with the firmness of bodily texture, and the grossness of intellects in people situated far to the north. They say, with Montesquieu, that drunkenness prevails over the whole earth in proportion to the coldness and moisture of the climate, and that people who inhabit a windy country are generally wild and fickle, as the Gascons and Thracians; whereas a calm situation settles and tranquillizes the mind.

On the other hand, those who endeavour to account for the variety which is observable in national characters from fixed moral causes, or from particular accidents (which might give a turn to the dispositions of the founders of a state, and be afterwards propagated by example, as language is), allege other historical facts, as that Athens and Thebes were situated near together, yet the inhabitants of those towns differed much in their national character; as do the ancient and modern Greeks, though inhabiting the same climate. Travellers, however, do say, that many of the Greeks, particularly the Athenians, show a great deal of natural quickness of apprehension, notwithstanding the civil disadvantages they labour under, disadvantages enow to damp the brightest genius that ever appeared

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among men. They say that the people of Languedoc and Gascony are the gayest people in France, whereas the Spaniards, who are separated from them only by the Pyrenees, are as remarkably heavy; that the Jews in Europe, and the Armenians in the East, have the same peculiar character in all places, as well as the Jesuits and the Quakers; and that the Spanish, Dutch, and French colonies, though situated in the same or similar climates, retain the peculiarities of their respective mother countries.

Even habits which depend very much upon the constitution of the body, which is universally acknowledged to be greatly influenced by the climate, do by no means correspond to it. Both the ancient and modern Germans, indeed, were remarkable for their addictedness to drinking; but the Persians, who are now the most abstemious people in the world, were, in ancient times, as much the contrary. Artaxerxes reckoned himself superior to his brother Cyrus because he was a better drinker. Darius Hystaspes caused it to be inscribed upon his tomb, that no person could bear a greater quantity of liquor, and Alexander the Great was obliged to drink hard in order to recommend himself to the same people. The Moscovites, a very northern nation, were as jealous as any people in the south, before their communication with the rest of Europe. The English, they say, have least of an uniform national character, on account of their liberty and independence, which enables every man to follow his own humour.

These, and all the varieties observable in the human species, furnish a most pleasing object of attention to a reader of history. A moralist, without the aid of history, which furnishes him with more extensive observations than his own experience could reach, would

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be too apt to grow bigoted to arbitrary and fanciful hypotheses about the division of the faculties of the human mind, about the proper office of each faculty, and the uniformity of its operations. Several varieties in what is called the moral sense were noted in the lecture upon the moral uses of history. To these I shall now add, in order to lead the attention of a reader of history to other varieties of a similar nature, which affect the theory of the human mind and its faculties, that the Japanese think suicide virtuous when not injurious to society, and the Chinese certainly think it no sin to expose the children they cannot maintain. These, and the different degrees of value set upon particular virtues, and the different degrees of horror conceived against particular vices, in different nations and ages, are well worth the attention of a philosopher and moralist.

It is not beneath him to consider even the varieties there are in the outward form of the human species, since it is evident there are some things very remarkable in the make of the body and turn of the features, which we learn from history has ever been peculiar to certain nations, and by which one may be greatly assisted in tracing the origin and migration of people. I shall mention a few of these differences, with a view to excite you to investigate this subject more thoroughly than it has yet been done.

The African blacks are well known to be different from the Europeans, and not more in the colour of their skin than in the form of their lips and noses, the hair of their heads, and the shape of their legs. Lapland produces no men taller than three cubits; their eyes, ears, and noses are different from those of all other people who surround them. As Voltaire says, they seem to be formed purposely for the climate they

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inhabit. The people of Caffraria are of an olive colour; the people of Sophila, Montbaza, and Melinda are black, but of a different species from those of Nigritia. The Tartars and native Americans, and the inhabitants of Kamtschatka, have thin beards. Du Halde says, the very make of the Chinese mouth is different from that of the Europeans; their teeth are placed in a different manner from ours, as the under row stands out, very unlike those of Europeans.

Even the diseases to which mankind have been subject in different ages, and to which they are incident in different parts of the world, are a striking object of attention to an historian. Diseases are mentioned in antiquity which are almost unknown to modern medicine; and new diseases have arisen and propagated themselves, of which there are no traces in ancient history. The small and the great pox, which are not so much as mentioned by any ancient author, destroy, it is thought, the tenth or twelfth part of mankind every generation. The origin of these diseases has been the subject of much controversy, and it can only be decided by history. The leprosy was hardly known in Europe till it was imported in the time of the Crusades, and the prevalence of that disorder in those times is now hardly credible. Philip Augustus of France bequeathed one hundred sols to each of the two thousand lazarettoes in his kingdom.

Matter of useful philosophical speculation may arise even from the consideration of the *vices* to which mankind have been addicted, particularly to the prevalence of particular vices in certain countries and the succession of vices in different ages.

Two centuries ago (as the progress of revenge is ingeniously traced in the Law Tracts) assassination was the crime in fashion in Europe; but it wore out by

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degrees, and made way for a more covered, but more detestable method of destruction, by poison. This horrid crime was extremely fashionable in France and Italy. It vanished, however, imperceptibly, and was succeeded by a less dishonourable method of exercising revenge, viz. by duelling *.

Lastly, no philosopher, in reading history, can pass without particular observation whatever occurs with respect to the *languages* of different ages and nations. Every thing relating to their rise, progress, and revolutions, will demand his attention, being useful both in tracing the migrations of people, as was observed before, and in throwing light upon the sentiments and feelings of the human mind, to which language corresponds, and being thereby subservient, in a variety of ways, to many philosophical speculations.

LECTURE LXVI.

THE noblest object of attention to an historian, and to every person who considers himself as a subject of the moral government of God, I have reserved for the last place; and that is, the conduct of Divine Providence in the direction of human affairs. This is the most sublime subject of contemplation that can employ the mind of man. And, as was shown in the first part of this course †, has the happiest tendency to inspire our hearts with the sentiments of piety and virtue.

Confused and perplexed as is the prospect which history exhibits to our view, it is, in reality, an exhibition of the ways of God, and jointly with the works

* See this practice exposed, *West. Rev.* iv. 20.—*Ed.*

† See *supra*, p. 52.—*Ed.*

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of nature (which, at first sight, present a prospect equally confused and perplexed) leads us to the knowledge of his perfections and of his will.

Hitherto indeed, next to the Scriptures, we have been chiefly indebted to the latter of these instructors for what we know of God. But the time may come when we shall have as frequent recourse to the former. The principles of the latter are, no doubt, as yet, far better understood; since, by the successive observations of some ages of mankind, much more of uniformity has been discovered amidst their seeming irregularity. The chief reason of this is, that the operations of nature are more fully exposed to our view. Every observation and experiment may be repeated as often as we please, and to as much advantage as we can possibly devise; whereas the events which take place in consequence of the views of Divine Providence happen but once, and our knowledge of them, and of all the circumstances which attended them (from which only we can judge either of their efficient or final causes), are but imperfectly transmitted to us by history: for which reason we see little more as yet than a chaos and heap of confusion in the scene.

But let not this discourage us in our researches. What is truly valuable in the history of past ages is every day cleared from more and more of the obscurity in which it has been involved. In consequence of which, the series and connexion of events may be more strictly traced, so that we may say the plan of this divine drama is opening more and more, and the grand catastrophe growing nearer and nearer, perpetually. As, therefore, this most interesting subject may now be studied to more advantage than it could hitherto have been done, we ought to give more attention to it than has hitherto been given, and endeavour to

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ascertain and enlarge our knowledge of the divine perfections, from considerations and topics of argument, of which little use has hitherto been made for this purpose.

It may, by some, be thought presumptuous in man to attempt to scan the ways of God in the conduct of human affairs. But the same objection might with equal justice be made to the study of the works of God in the frame of nature. Both methods are equally attempts to trace out the perfections and providence of God, by means of different footsteps which he has left us of them, differing only in this, that the one is much more distinct than the other. What is the whole science of physiology but an attempt to investigate the reasons, or final causes, of the structure of the several parts of nature, with a view to see farther into the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Being manifested in his works? And in fact, so far is this conduct, in either case, from impiety, that it is the proper and the noblest use we can make of our intellectual faculties, which is to attain to the knowledge of God our maker, by means of observations on every part of his works, or conduct, which he has thought proper to exhibit to our view, and, as it were, to subject to our examination, no doubt for this very purpose.

The greatest caution is, certainly, requisite in our researches into this subject; and very rash and unbecoming would it be in us to pronounce, in a peremptory manner, what was the intention of the Deity in any of the events of this lower world, because we are able to see and to compare so very few of the circumstances with which they are connected. But taking for granted what we already do know of God, both from his works and from his word, we cannot err far in any conclusions we draw from the observation of his pro-

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vidence. And it cannot but be a very great satisfaction to a pious mind to see his faith in the divine power and wisdom, which was first established upon the preceding foundation, corroborated by observations on other appearances.

To proceed, therefore, in the surest manner in our inquiries into the conduct of Divine Providence, we ought to take for granted the doctrines of the wisdom and goodness of God, as suggested from his works and his word, and look upon it as a fair presumption that we are not far wrong in our conjectures, when we see a course of events in the history of the world terminating in the same benevolent purposes. And we ought to hesitate and suspend our judgment upon the view of any seemingly contrary appearances, waiting the result of farther observations.

This is strictly analogous to the most approved methods of reasoning and the strictest philosophical investigation, and pursuing an universally allowed maxim in the conduct of our understanding in other similar cases. In examining even the works of men, if we have any reason to suppose uniformity and consistency of design in them, we are guided in our inquiries into the structure of their parts, by a view to this consistency, and never conclude against that consistency which the greater number of appearances suggest to us, from the first view of circumstances not easily reconcileable with it.

In like manner, since, in the greatest part of the works of God, we see plain marks of wise and kind intention, we never think we ought to give up our belief of the wisdom and goodness of God, because we are not able to see how every appearance in nature is reconcileable with them; and if this be our maxim in the investigation of the works of nature, much more

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ought it to be so in scanning the ways of God in the course of his providence; this being a subject in itself much more obscure, and to which our faculties, for the reasons given above, are much more unequal. Let an historian, therefore, attend to every instance of improvement, and a better state of things being brought about, by the events which are presented to him in history, and let him ascribe those events to an *intention* in the Divine Being to bring about that better state of things by means of those events; and if he cannot see the same benevolent tendency in all other appearances, let him remain in suspense with regard to them.

Let the person, then, who would trace the conduct of Divine Providence, attend to every advantage which the present age enjoys above ancient times, and see whether he cannot perceive marks of things being in a progress towards a state of greater perfection: let him particularly attend to every event which contributes to the propagation of religious knowledge; and lastly, let him carefully observe all the evils which mankind complain of, and consider whether they be not either remedies of greater evils, or, supposing the general constitution of things unalterable, the necessary means of introducing a greater degree of happiness than could have been brought about by any other means; at least, whether they be not, in fact, subservient to a state of greater happiness. I shall make a few observations upon each of these heads, in order to assist you in your farther inquiries into this important subject.

That the state of the world at present, and particularly the state of Europe, is vastly preferable to what it was in any former period, is evident from the very first view of things. A thousand circumstances show how inferior the ancients were to the moderns in religious knowledge, in science in general, in government,

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in laws both of the laws of nations and those of particular states, in arts, in commerce, in the conveniencies of life, in manners, and, in consequence of all these, in *happiness*. Almost all these particulars have been demonstrated in the course of these lectures. I shall therefore confine myself, in this place, to two particulars, comprehended under the general subject of laws and government, in which the superiority of the internal constitution of modern states above those of the ancients will appear to great advantage; and those are *personal security*, and *personal liberty*.

Personal security, or a freedom from violence and insult, is certainly the most important object of all civil government, and it cannot be desirable to live, where that is not firmly established; and a very few instances will show the extreme insecurity of ancient times in comparison of the modern, and particularly the present state of England.

We may judge of the state of Greece in this respect by that passage in a dialogue of Xenophon quoted before, in which he humorously shows the advantages of poverty and the inconvenience of riches; and by what Tacitus says, that their temples were full of debtors and criminals, as churches and monasteries used formerly to be in Popish countries.

Rome, and the neighbourhood of it, in the most interesting period of its history, viz. in the time of Cicero, abounded with robbers. Sallust says, that Catiline's army was much augmented by the accession of highwaymen* about Rome. Cicero observed, that had Milo waylaid Clodius by night, it might have been imagined he had been killed by highwaymen, and that the frequency of such accidents would have favoured the sup-

* "Latrones cujusque generis, quorum eâ in regione magna copia erat." *Bell. Cat.—Ed.*

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position*, though he had thirty slaves with him completely armed, and accustomed to blood and danger. By the law of the twelve tables, possession for two years formed a prescription for land, and of one year for moveables; an evident mark of frequent violences, when such a law was necessary to secure a title to property.

Barbarous nations appear to have been in no better a situation, in proportion to the property they had. Hirtius says, that in Cæsar's time every man in Spain was obliged to live in a castle, or walled town, for his security. There are a thousand evidences of the violence and insecurity of the feudal times in all parts of Europe. Every retainer to a powerful lord might do whatever he pleased with impunity. It was no uncommon thing for a parcel of desperate fellows, such as Robin Hood and his companions, independently of any lord, to live in defiance of all the laws and administration in being, without ever being brought to punishment. Nay, such bands of robbers often acquired a considerable degree of reputation. Kings entered into treaties with them, and bought their service at a considerable price. The armies of Edward III. consisted chiefly of such banditti; and they formed the best part of all the armies then employed in Europe. In those times every person of any estate or property lived in a kind of castle; the moats, the strong enclosures, and the battlements about all old country seats, together with many other circumstances, show that they were built more for security, than for convenience, or pleasure.

* "Noctu, invidioso et pleno latronum in loco occidisset.—Sustinuisset hoc crimen ipse ille latronum occultator, et receptator locus." *Pro Milone.—Ed.*

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As instances enow were given of the wretchedness of those times in the lecture upon the feudal system, I shall content myself, in this place, with an extract from Voltaire, showing the state of Italy so late as in the 16th century, which was a pretty just picture of a great part of the rest of Europe. "Italy, surrounded by the arts, and in the very bosom of peace, was deficient in respect of general police, and had a long time been infested with public robbers, like ancient Greece in the most barbarous times. Whole troops of armed banditti marauded from one province to another, from the frontiers of Milan to the further end of the kingdom of Naples, either purchasing a protection of the petty princes, or obliging them to wink at their rapines. The papal see could not clear its dominions of them till the time of Sixtus V. Even after his pontificate they appeared sometimes. The example of these free-booters encouraged private persons to put in practice the shocking custom of assassination. The use of the stiletto was but too common in the towns, while the country was overrun with banditti. The students of Padua used to knock people on the head, as they were passing under the piazzas which run along each side of the street."

The greater security of the present times, above that of the state of Europe during the prevalence of the feudal system, is evident from this circumstance. That which we call *treasure trove*, or the discovery of concealed money, &c., was in former times a considerable part of the revenues of the lords to whom the land belonged; which shows that it had been much the custom to hide things of value, for fear of being plundered of them, and that those who hid them had been so often obliged to abandon them, that no body knew

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where they were. At present such a source of revenue would never be thought of, but every thing that was *found*, unclaimed by any body, would be the property of the finder.

So little was the security of property in the feudal times, that men were often gainers by divesting themselves of it, and giving it to the church, of which they held it in fee. Methods similar to this are at this day taken in Turkey.

The history of *fairs* furnishes another argument for the improved state of Europe. They were instituted when travelling was unsafe, and all property exposed to plunder. However, needy lords and needy sovereigns consented that, upon certain terms, traders might meet and exchange their commodities, without the risk of their being seized, and with the privilege of going and returning unmolested. A commerce thus restricted was better than no commerce at all. At present, however, those great fairs have little advantage, except what they derive from custom; and in countries perfectly civilized they are almost fallen into disuse. Individuals travel with ease and safety, and do business in a manner more advantageous to themselves.

That there is less domestic slavery in the world than formerly is very evident, notwithstanding the late revival of that shocking practice in the West Indies. And domestic slavery is far more cruel and oppressive than any civil subjection whatever; just as it is more grievous to submit to a petty prince, whose dominions extend not beyond a single city, than to obey a great monarch; the subjects of a petty prince, and the slaves of a private person, being more immediately under the eye of their master.

The number of slaves in ancient times is almost in-

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credible at this day. Strabo says, that 10,000 slaves have been often sold in a day for the use of the Romans, only in one particular place, viz. Delas in Cilicia. Eunus and Athenio gave liberty to 60,000 slaves in Sicily; and other immense armies were frequently raised out of them. At Athens, and all the considerable cities in Greece, slaves were generally four times, or even in a greater proportion, more numerous than the freemen*.

The petty tyrannies into which almost all ancient nations in early times were divided, could differ very little from a large family, in which one was master and the rest slaves. Indeed, the universal odium into which every name of kingly power fell in Greece and Italy, shows the case to have been as it is here represented.

In the feudal times in Europe, in which oppressions of all kinds prevailed, this was not the least evil; the labouring people and the artisans were as much the property of the great landholders as the soil itself: and the case is nearly the same at this day in Poland. That mankind are happier in this respect than formerly, and that there is a prospect of the farther increase of personal security and personal liberty, in consequence of any course of events, and especially those which favour the propagation of knowledge in general, and of the Christian religion in particular, must be ascribed to the wisdom and goodness of God, who made, and who governs the world.

* See supra, p. 452.—*Ed.*

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LECTURE LXVII.

THE order of the divine dispensations, or the gradual advancement of religious knowledge, and those circumstances in the history of the world which have contributed to its advancement, are very important objects of attention to an historian and divine, but it would be departing out of my province to dwell upon them in this place. This subject has been excellently treated by the late bishop of Carlisle*, in his *Considerations on the Theory of Religion*†; in which performance he has shown, from the state of the world, as collected from history, that Christ came *in the fulness of time*, both when the Christian doctrines were the most wanted, and when every thing was most favourable to their evidence and propagation.

The circumstances of the Reformation ought also to be attended to with the same view, and it ought to be considered that the benefit of the Reformation is by no means to be regarded as confined to the reformed party. The Reformation was but like a little leaven, which leavened the whole lump. The state of the catholic church is prodigiously better than it was before the existence of protestantism. There are fewer abuses in the papal constitution than formerly; and popish princes, though they remain attached to the rights of the Romish church, have, in fact, thrown off all subjection to the pope. A similar service has been done to the church

* Dr. Edmund Law, who died 1787, aged 83. See *A Short Memoir* by Dr. Paley, with notes by Dr. Disney: *Monthly Repos.* 1818, Vol. xiii. p. 289. —*Ed.*

† First published 1745; a 6th edition, much enlarged, 1784. The *Theory* has been lately republished by the author's son, now bishop of Bath and Wells.—*Ed.*

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of England by the old puritans and the present dissenters.

Our greatest difficulty in tracing the conduct of Divine Providence in the government of the world arises from the state of *war*, in which, upon the first reading of history, mankind seem to have been almost perpetually engaged.

This is so striking a circumstance to the generality of readers of history, that it has been asserted that history contains nothing but a view of the vices and the misery of mankind. To me, however, and, I believe, to many others, this subject appears in a very different light. Times of peace and tranquillity are passed over in silence by all historians, and for this reason the face of history presents so horrid an aspect. But if any person will take the trouble to calculate accurately, he will probably find that war has borne no greater a proportion to peace than sickness has borne to health, in the ordinary course of human life. If, therefore, the diseases we are subject to (the constitution of our nature considered) be upon the whole salutary, or if that constitution whereby we are exposed to them be the best upon the whole, so that we should rather choose to be exposed to them than not, no particular objection will lie to the conduct of Providence on account of the evils of war.

If, moreover, we consider that the numbers slain in battle are absolutely inconsiderable in comparison of those who die a natural death, even in very destructive wars, and that the plague, the small-pox, and many other disorders, do much more execution than the sword; and besides, that, with respect to the greatest part of those who actually perish in war, the course of nature may possibly have been but little anticipated;

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we shall see reason to conclude that, provided posterity be in any respect better for the war, the lives lost in it were very well lost. Considering what kind of persons compose the bulk of our modern armies, it may, without any hesitation, be said, that it is more than probable in no other way could they have done their country so much service.

In all speculations of this nature, war ought to be considered as confined to those who are sufferers by it. For certainly it would be very absurd to consider all the people of England, or France, as in a state of war during the period of their late mutual hostilities, when the far greater part of them were very inconsiderably affected by it, paying only a few taxes extraordinary on that account. This inconvenience (to recur to our former allusion) is like nothing more than a slight cold, a temporary headach, or such pains as pass every day without any attention.

The nature and necessity of *evils in general* I shall not undertake to discuss, as it belongs wholly to another subject. I shall only, in this place, consider whether, allowing the necessity of human nature being what it is in other respects, the disposition to hostility has not, upon the whole, been serviceable to mankind, and whether they would not have been in a worse situation without that disposition.

Now it appears to me, that, in early ages, before mankind had acquired a taste for intellectual pleasures, when they studied nothing but the gratification of their lower appetites, they would have sunk into a state of such gross bestiality, and have abused their bodies to such a degree, as would have been almost inconsistent with the continuance of the species, had it not been for the salutary alarms of war, which roused the activity, and excited the ingenuity, of men.

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It is nothing but difficulty that can call forth the utmost efforts of our faculties; and without a dread of the greatest impending evils, nothing belonging to science, or whatever requires the exertion of our intellectual faculties, could have been carried on. Many of the most useful arts in civil life owe their origin to contrivances for defence or offence in war. "Men's wars and treaties, their mutual jealousy, and the establishments which they devise with a view to each other," says M. Charlevoix, "constitute more than half the occupations of mankind, and furnish materials for the greatest and most improving exertions *".

Mankind seem to have required a greater spur to ingenuity than merely the prospect of providing themselves with the conveniencies of life, or they would never have procured those conveniencies. It is not even the better living of the English that can induce the wild Irish to quit his native sluggishness, so long as he can live in his own poor way. What then could reasonably have been expected of mankind, when the greatest part of them were habituated to the same way of life? What arts, sciences, or improvements of any kind, could have been expected from them? It is analogous to this, that, in common life, we see the fear of hell operating more powerfully upon the sensual part of mankind, than the prospect of all the pleasures of virtue, or the hope of heaven.

With respect to those things with which the happiness of mankind, either in a private or social capacity, are most closely connected,—as religion, liberty, and the sciences,—it is an undeniable fact, that they have been chiefly promoted by events which, at first sight, appeared the most disastrous.

* *Voyage to Canada.*

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There is nothing which Christians of all professions dread more, and more constantly pray to be delivered from (and all this justly), than *persecution*, though all history informs us that, in general, nothing has been more favourable to the spread of the tenets of the persecuted party. Persecution inflames the zeal of those who are persecuted, and this spreads as it were by infection. By dying in any cause, a man gives a stronger proof than he could in any other way give of his own attachment to it, and his steady faith in its principles and importance; a circumstance which operates powerfully on the faith of others. Persecution also dispersed the professors of Christianity in primitive times, whereby their doctrines were spread into countries whither they would otherwise have hardly reached at all, or not till after a much longer time.

Martyrs, likewise, in the cause of *liberty* have given the firmest establishment to it in any country. This was the case in many of the states of Greece. How much did the tragical ends of Lucretia and Virginia operate towards the liberty of Rome!* Numberless friends to the same glorious cause were made in Holland by the death of the prince of Orange, who died fighting for it; and in England by that of the famous Algernon Sydney, who equally died a martyr to it, though under the pretence of law.

There is another view in which we may see the benefit indirectly resulting from the wars in which bigoted princes have been engaged, as they have prevented their employing all their power to the extirpation of what they thought to be *heresy*; and by this means the propagation of truth has been greatly favoured. The bishop of Osma, confessor to Charles V.,

* See supra, p. 273.—*Ed.*

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advised him to behave with generosity to his prisoner Francis I., as the only means of stopping the progress of the Turks, and extinguishing the Lutheran heresy, which he said increased every day, and would increase more if their differences continued, but might easily be destroyed if the princes were united among themselves*. His brother Ferdinand was obliged to defer his persecuting measures by his wars with the Turks. And, to mention one instance more, Henry II. of France acknowledged to the prince of Orange, that, after the peace concluded between him and Philip II. of Spain, it was the design of that king to extinguish the smallest spark of heresy in the Low Countries, and to join his arms to those of France, to attack the new sectaries with their joint forces†. How these projects were providentially defeated, the history of the succeeding times will show.

Though the sciences seem to be utterly repugnant to war, and, in general, certainly suffer by it, the cause of learning hath often been remarkably served by it. Learned men flee from the seat of war, and thereby their knowledge becomes dispersed into countries into which they would never have been induced to carry it, by any motive whatever. This happened at the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, when the learned men, who had no favour shown them by their new masters, fled into Italy, and established schools, in which they taught their own literature for a subsistence‡. Barbarous nations generally gain arts, sciences, religion, and a better form of government, on being conquered by a civilized nation, and they have likewise often acquired them by conquering the nation which was pos-

* Beausobre's *Histoire de la Reformation*, vol. iii. p. 146.

† Thuani *Hist.* lib. 22.

‡ See supra, p. 288.—*Ed.*

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sessed of them; instances of which will appear in the subsequent observations on the effects of *conquest*, which is generally considered as the last and the worst evil that can be suffered by war.

LECTURE LXVIII.

THE effects of conquests have often been remarkably happy, and not less so to the conquered than the conquering people. It doth not appear, from the history of the early ages of the world, that commerce alone (if the industry of men could have been so far roused as to enable them to carry it on without war) would have promoted such an intercourse between different nations, and have brought them so far acquainted with one another, as was requisite for curing their mutual prejudices, for improving their genius and tempers, and thereby laying a foundation for a sufficiently extensive benevolence.

History informs us that it was war, and war only, which, making it impossible for the Edomites and other inhabitants of Palestine to stay at home, forced them to seek settlements on the coasts of the Mediterranean, and promoted the intercourse of that part of the world with Greece; the consequence of which was, the amazing improvement of that country, and its making a figure which will, to the end of the world, attract the admiration of mankind.

Conquests have, in general, been made with the most ease when the government of the conquered people was grown very corrupt, and a change of masters was necessary for the good of the country. This was remarkably the case of the Greek empire. The several

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provinces of it were oppressed with excessive taxes, which made them glad to take shelter, as it were, from greater evils, under the government of the Saracens and Turks, who had not the luxury, or the wants, of their former masters.

We see the benefit accruing to a barbarous nation from their conquest of a civilized one in the conquests which the Saracens made upon the provinces of the Greek empire, whereby they came into possession of their sciences; in the conquest of Persia, and the seat of the Saracen empire, by the Tartars; who immediately adopted the religion, and soon became enamoured of the sciences, of the people they had conquered. And no nation ever subdued the Chinese without conforming to their wise laws, customs, and manners, in every respect. The conquest of Greece by the Romans extended the knowledge of the Grecian arts, and made the Romans learned and polite; and their conquests of other nations contributed to civilize them as much.

There was not perhaps a country conquered by the Romans, but may be clearly shown to have been a considerable gainer by its subjection, and by being incorporated into that vast and wonderfully compacted system. All Europe was in a most disordered uncivilized state before the Roman conquests; nor doth it appear that any other more expeditious, or more effectual, method could have been found to civilize them.

Gaul manifestly found its account in being conquered by the Romans. Before that event, there were no arts or commerce in Gaul, except at Marseilles, a colony of Greeks; but afterwards Arles, Autun, Lyons, and Triers, became flourishing cities. They peaceably enjoyed their municipal laws, in subordination to the regulations of the Romans, and they were animated by

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a very extensive commerce. The like was the case with Britain, Spain, and all the northern nations conquered by the Romans.

Polybius supposes that Greece became more populous and flourishing after the establishing of the Roman empire in that country. Syria was certainly never so happy as under the Romans; and Strabo praises the superior policy of the Romans with regard to the finances of Egypt, above that of their former monarchs; and no part of administration is so essential to the happiness of a people.

The easy communication which the uniformity of government established through that vast empire, favoured the propagation of the gospel through all the countries of which it consisted. And, to conclude, there may perhaps be something in what an ingenious author has advanced, that large empires extend the genius of mankind. I suppose he means by suggesting great projects; in many respects, giving a greater scope to the faculties of men's minds, and supplying a great object to the imagination. And there is certainly more of grandeur, and what we may call the sublime, in the Roman history, than the Grecian, notwithstanding, in almost every other respect, the latter be the more agreeable object.

It justly shocks our humanity to read of thousands of brave men being cut off in the field of battle, and to go over in our imagination all the desolation and distress of every kind which war spreads through a country; but we ought to consider, what a foundation for future and general happiness those temporary evils may, for any thing we know to the contrary, be laying. We cannot, indeed, always see the particular advantages accruing to a country from those shocks that are

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given to it; but, in some cases, as in those mentioned above, it requires no great penetration to perceive them pretty distinctly.

To mention a recent and striking instance of this kind, but of a more private nature—Can we conceive it possible that Jean Calas of Thoulouse could have done a tenth part of the service to his country by his life, which it is probable he has done by his death, in the abhorrence of bigotry, which his unjust and tragical end has raised in a great part of that nation, and in affording a subject for a book which is likely to be of so much service to the cause of religious liberty as that of Voltaire's upon toleration, and other writings of a similar tendency? I shall now return to examples of a more general nature.

It has been observed before, that the constant wars of the feudal princes laid a foundation for the civil liberty we now enjoy, by obliging those princes to grant the people great privileges, in return for the supplies necessary for carrying on their wars. And thus evils of all kinds, in this and many other cases, have been seen, under the government of God, to have been the occasion of greater happiness than could, in the common course of things, have taken place without them.

The intolerable abuses of popery were the means of exciting such an attention to the subject of those abuses, as brought on a quicker and more extensive spread of religious knowledge than would, probably, have taken place without those abuses. Had not two or three of the popes immediately before the Reformation, and particularly Alexander VI., been so abominably wicked; had not Julius II. been ambitious; had not Leo X. been profuse and extortionate; had not the abuse of indulgences been so shameless, Europe might have

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been but little improved in religious knowledge, notwithstanding the revival of letters and the invention of printing.

Popery, during the prevalence of it, was attended with several accidental advantages. The monks were fond of desert places, which occasioned the cultivation of many of them, by drawing a concourse of people after them; so that many flourishing towns were built in places where we should least of all expect them. A remarkable example of this is Halifax in Yorkshire.

Popery connected the several parts of Europe, which was in danger of being disjoined by the dismembering of the Roman empire. The superstition of that system provided an asylum for the remains of learning in those barbarous ages, and by loosening men's attachment to the Grecian sects of philosophy, broke the progress of authority in matters of science; thereby leaving men at liberty to follow their own genius, without depriving them of any benefit they could receive from the labours of those who had gone before them.

There was hardly any event in history so calamitous to Europe in general as *the Crusades;* and besides the numbers who lost their lives in those mad expeditions, they brought back the leprosy, which destroyed and made wretched greater numbers at home. But it should be considered that it was a great means of establishing the liberties of the lower orders of men, dispersing the wealth, and breaking the power of the great barons, of bringing Europe acquainted with the Eastern world, and of introducing much useful knowledge, in which this part of the world was then greatly deficient.

Upon the whole, so evident is the tendency of the most disastrous events which disfigure the face of hi-

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story, upon our first looking on it, to bring about the most happy and desirable state of things, and so superlatively efficacious is their operation for this purpose (or at least so close is the connexion they have with what appears, even to us, to be the best part of the constitution of things), that the more we study the works of Providence, as well as those of nature, the more reason shall we see to be satisfied with, and to rejoice in, all the fair conclusions we can draw from them. The more we study history in this view, the more thoroughly shall we be satisfied with our situation and connexions; the more will our gratitude to the wise and kind Author of the universe be inflamed; and the more desirous shall we be to promote, by our conduct, and by methods of operation of which we are able to judge, that end, which we perceive the Divine Being is pursuing, though by methods of operation of which we are not always competent judges, and which, therefore, we ought not to attempt to imitate.

Let the plain duties of morality be our rule of life. We see and experience their happy effects. But let us acquiesce in the Divine conduct, when we see him producing the same good and glorious ends, by means which are apt at first to alarm our narrow apprehensions, on account of their seeming to have a contrary tendency.

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APPENDIX*.

Of the Constitution of the United States of America.

As all the youth of America, especially those that are liberally educated, ought to be well acquainted with the constitution of the country in which they live, and to which they must be subject, it will be proper to exhibit to them a general outline of it in the course of their education. For this purpose I take the liberty to give the following, with a few remarks, which lecturers may adopt, or correct, as they shall see reason.

The *United States* of North America consist at present of seventeen† separate states, each of which has a separate constitution of its own choosing; but for the sake of an union of their strength, and other important purposes, they agreed to form a constitution that should comprehend them all; and to this, with the limitations expressly defined, they are all subject.

The most fundamental article in every form of government is the *legislative* branch of it, that which has the power of making all the laws and regulations to which the whole community must be subject. This, in the United States, consists of three parts, a *President*, a *Senate*, and a *House of Representatives*; which is similar to that of England, as governed by king, lords, and commons, and was, no doubt, borrowed from it.

* See supra, p. 337.—*Ed.*

† Now increased to twenty-eight, of which (*proh pudor!*) fourteen are *slave* states.—*Ed.*

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The senate and the house of representatives are jointly called the *Congress*, and this must be assembled at least once every year.

The *President* must be 35 years of age, and at the time of his election must have resided in the country 14 years. He is chosen by the people at large, not, however, immediately, but by the intervention of *electors*, who must be chosen in the methods prescribed in the constitutions of the separate states; but the day for choosing them must be fixed by the congress, and it must be the same in all the states.

The person who has the greatest number of the votes of these electors is the president, provided that number be a majority of all their votes. If this number be equal, the house of representatives choose which of them they please by ballot. If in this case no one person has a majority of votes, they may choose out of five who are the highest on the list named by the electors. But then these votes must be taken by states, each of which has only one; and a majority of the states is necessary to any choice. If in this case the votes be equal, the senate shall choose by ballot.

He that has the next greatest number of the votes of the electors is the *Vice-president**.

The president thus chosen holds his office for 4 years, but may be re-elected without any limitation; so that it may be an office for life.

As a member of the legislative body, the president has only a limited negative on the resolutions of congress. If he disapprove of any bill that is presented to him, after having had the concurrence of both the houses, he must give his objections to it; and if two thirds of each house still abide by their first vote, the

* This mode has, I understand, been altered, so that *President* and *Vice-president* are now distinctly elected.—*Ed.*

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bill passes into a law, notwithstanding his rejection of it. Consequently, if it be not adopted by two thirds of either of the houses, though there should be a great majority of the members for it, it will not be a law; and cases may occur in which to do nothing at all would be a sensible inconvenience.

The president receives foreign ambassadors, and nominates to all the public offices, but his appointments must have the concurrence of two thirds of the *Senate*. In this case also, if two thirds of the senate do not agree to confirm the appointment, none can be made; but no member of congress can be appointed to any civil office, nor can any person holding such an office be a member of congress. The president has the power of pardoning any criminal, except such as have been impeached by the house of representatives. He has also the power of making treaties with foreign states, with the concurrence of two thirds of the senate.

The president is not bound to consult with any *council of state*, but takes the whole responsibility of his measures upon himself; but he may require the opinion of any of the heads of the several departments of government, which are the *secretaries of state, of the treasury, of war*, and *of the navy*, respecting any thing that comes under their cognizance.

In case of the death, or incapacity, of the president, the vice-president takes his place.

The senate consists of two members from each of the separate states, chosen by the legislators of each state, to serve for 6 years; but one third of the number must be changed every 2 years. Every senator must be of the age of 30 years, and have been a citizen of the United States 9 years. The senate tries all persons impeached by the house of representatives;

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but they can only punish by deprivation of office, or disqualification in future; and the conviction must be by the votes of two thirds of the members present at the trial. The vice-president presides in the senate, but without a vote, except in case of an equal division of the votes of the other members.

The members of the house of representatives must be 25 years of age, and have been citizens 7 years. They are chosen by the people at large every 2 years. All persons who have votes for members of the separate legislatures have votes for those who sit in congress. The number of the representative body varies according to the number of the separate states and the population of each state. For this purpose an enumeration of all the people must be made every 10 years, and the number of the representatives must not exceed one for 33,000; but every state shall at least have one.

All laws relating to the revenue must originate in the house of representatives, as in England, though there is not the same reason for it. They also have the sole power of impeaching any of the public officers.

The whole of the legislative body, consisting of the president and congress, can alone levy taxes and provide for the common defence. They alone can make peace or war, and regulate commerce, either with foreign states or the Indian tribes. They also determine every thing relating to the coinage of money, and establish posts and post-roads. But though they raise and support armies and navies, no appropriation of money for that purpose can be for a longer term than 2 years.

All the members of the legislative body receive salaries for their services, fixed by law. At present the

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president receives 25,000 dollars, the vice-president 5,000 per annum, and each of the senators and representatives 6 dollars per day.

The *United States* guarantee to all the separate states a republican form of government. But the congress cannot exercise any power not especially granted to them by the separate states, from which they derive all their power.

The *judiciary power* of the United States is vested by the constitution in a *supreme court*, and such inferior courts as the congress from time to time shall appoint; and all the judges hold their offices during their good behaviour.

In this manner is provision made for the *political liberty* of all the citizens of the United States, all of whom, without any regard to property, are eligible to any office, even that of president; and whatever be the abuse of power, they may, after a short period, correct it.

With respect to *civil liberty*, or the rights of individuals, to guard which is the great object of political liberty, every thing that is most valuable in the English constitution (which, before the establishment of this, was unquestionably the best in the world) is preserved, and more effectually guarded.

In this country the congress has no power to give any title of nobility*, or any exclusive privilege, except patents for a limited time, to those who make valuable improvements in the arts. There is also no general establishment of any system of religion. Consequently, every person is at full liberty to make the best use that he can of all his faculties.

For every alleged offence a man must be tried by a

* For the wisdom of this restraint, see supra, p. 331. Note*.—*Ed.*

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jury of his equals; and the writ of *habeas corpus*, in consequence of which every accused person must be brought to a speedy trial, cannot be suspended except in case of actual rebellion or invasion. The freedom of speech and of the press is declared to be inviolable, though recourse may be had to the law if any person receive injury from either.

The crime of high treason cannot be extended beyond the case of actually levying war against the state, or adhering to the enemies of it.

The citizens of each of the separate states are entitled to all the privileges of the citizens of the other states.

No alteration can be made by congress with respect to emigration, or the admission of strangers, before the year 1808; nor can a tax be imposed for this purpose exceeding 10 dollars for each person.

Notwithstanding the great attention that was given to the formation of this constitution, it was not supposed to be incapable of improvement. Accordingly it was provided that two thirds of the house of congress may at any time propose amendments of it; and on the application of two thirds of the separate states, they must call a *convention* to decide concerning the amendments proposed, and these must afterwards have the sanction of two thirds of the states.

The great excellence of this constitution consists in the simplicity of its object, which is the security of each individual in the enjoyment of his natural rights, without aiming at much positive advantage; by which means every person knowing that he will be effectually protected from violence and injustice, both against the evil-minded of his fellow-citizens, and the enemies of his nation, will be at full liberty to employ all his faculties for his own advantage; and this he will better

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understand, and provide for, than the state could do for him.

The power of the whole community may be easily united in works of acknowledged public utility, as roads, bridges, and navigable canals, and also in providing the means of education, of which all the citizens may take advantage.

The history of all the European governments shows that there is no wisdom in any government aiming at more than this. If it be impowered to teach religion, and provide a religious creed for all the citizens, it may as well provide a philosophical one, and fix an unalterable mode of instruction in any of the arts of life; the consequence of which would be an effectual stop to all improvements. For every improvement, being suggested by individuals, would be opposed by the more ignorant and bigoted majority, educated in the old imperfect methods.

The mode of choosing by electors leaves the choice to those who are better qualified to judge than the greater number who choose them. At the same time the electors, being few, are under a greater degree of responsibility. All history shows that the more numerous is the body that decides upon any thing, the more hasty, intemperate, and injudicious are their resolutions. In a multitude they are but few who really think and judge for themselves: consequently they are guided by a few who do think; but, being under no particular responsibility, are often influenced by their private views to mislead the rest.

It is objected to the constitution of the senate, that the members are not chosen by the people at large, that they are too few, and that they continue in office too long; in consequence of which they are too indepen-

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dent on the people, and more easily gained by the president.

On the other hand, there is certainly a great advantage in a set of men of greater age and experience, not chosen by the common people, and who continue a considerable time in office, to be a check upon those who are chosen at shorter periods, and who are therefore apt to be unreasonably impressed by temporary and local circumstances, so as to make hasty and improper resolutions.

One use of a senate in which every question may be discussed independently of the house of representatives, is, no doubt, the having an opportunity of reconsidering every subject, and thereby preventing too hasty resolutions. But this, which might be provided for many ways without another house, is not the only use of it. Another, and of equal importance, is the viewing it with different eyes and in different lights; which could not be done by the very same body of men, bearing exactly the same relation to their fellow-citizens, though having the same general interest with them.

It is also objected that the small states send to congress the same number of senators as the largest. But this was found to be a necessary compromise, in order to induce those small states to join the union. If the number sent by each was *three*, instead of *two*, the objection would be in a great measure answered.

The election of the representatives every two years, and not annually, has the advantage of making them in a small and useful degree independent of the great mass of the people, whose good opinion was necessary to their re-election. In this situation, were the elections annual, they might be tempted to act in their legis-

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lative capacity in a manner that they did not really approve, but which they knew would be more pleasing to their constituents. These being numerous, and little informed, are subject to improper influence, looking more to their immediate than to their remote and permanent interest. It may admit of a doubt whether a *triennial* would not for this reason be preferable to a *biennial* election. A *septennial* one, as in England, would make them too independent on their electors.

Nothing that is human can ever be absolutely perfect: but in this constitution every evil incident to society is, to appearance, as well guarded against as human wisdom could devise; and the experience of more than 14 years [in 1803] has discovered but few things that seem to want amendment, or rather a clearer explanation.

As the president and two thirds of the senate have the power of making *treaties*, and nothing is said of the limitation of that power, they have claimed, and exercised, the power of making treaties to regulate commerce, a power which is expressly confined to the whole congress; and on the same pretence they might make treaties offensive and defensive with foreign nations, and thus involve the country in a war.

It may admit of a doubt whether it be wise to have it possible that any president should hold that important office for life, in consequence of a constant re-election; because, in those circumstances, it will be his interest (which few persons have magnanimity enough to overlook) to fill places of trust and power rather with such persons as will serve him in his ambitious views, than with those that are the best qualified to discharge the duties of the office. On the other hand, there is a disadvantage in frequent changes of the president, on account of a possible change of

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general maxims and views in government, which would be attended with inconvenience both with respect to the citizens at home, and in transactions with foreign nations.

Something, it is hoped, will in due time be done to prevent the recurrence of such a situation as at the election of a president in 1800; when the person universally acknowledged to be intended for president by all the electors, and all their constituents, might have been set aside, and the person intended for vice-president only, put in his place.

Aliens may now become citizens in five years; but I see no good reason why any person actually residing in the country, and having his property in it, should not be entitled to all the privileges of citizens, except that of eligibility to offices of trust and power; nor do I see any good end answered by *oaths of allegiance*. It is surely sufficient if any person found to act against the interest of the state be amenable to a court of justice, and punishable for any misdemeanor. Lastly, we are warned by the acts of a late congress respecting *sedition* and *aliens*, to fix upon something less liable to misconstruction and abuse on those important articles.

It is a remarkable circumstance in this constitution (and also in that of, I believe, all the subordinate states), that in no other country are the salaries of the public officers so low. This is by many objected to them as a defect, since persons in offices of the greatest trust have it not in their power to live in a style sufficiently striking, and calculated to impose respect. Also when by old age or disease they are rendered incapable of discharging the duties of office, no provision whatever is made for them.

In replying to this, it must be allowed to be reasonable that a man who has actually served his country

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in any public capacity, as that of judge, &c., and whose salary while in office had not enabled him to make a decent provision for old age, should have some recompense in proportion to his past services. It is the natural claim of every old and faithful servant in a private family.

But in favour of the maxim of this government, which gives no more than is found necessary to its being well served, it may be said, that it has the advantage of excluding from offices of trust those who may be suspected of coveting them from the motive of avarice; and it leaves the more room for men of honourable ambition, and who cannot be suspected of being actuated by any thing else. And it is a poor country indeed that cannot furnish persons enow of independent fortunes, both able and willing to serve their country in any capacity, civil or military; and it does not appear that hitherto there has been any want of such candidates in this country, notwithstanding the smallness of the salaries.

If the *honour* and *power* necessarily annexed to public offices be thought to be a sufficient recompense for serving them, why should any *money* be given? If there should be no choice of men of talents but among the needy, the case would be different.

In the present state of things, men of talents, but without fortune, may think themselves happy in a country, the government of which is so excellently constituted, and so peculiarly favourable to ingenuity and industry, by means of which they may serve themselves, and the country too, in many ways, independently of having access to public offices. They are not prevented from suggesting hints to those who do act, though they cannot act themselves.

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To annex certain privileges to the acquisition of property operates as a motive to industry, by which property may be acquired; and this ought to be encouraged by the laws of every country. For the same reason, if it be the object of any country to promote the acquisition of knowledge and general information (and this is certainly desirable in a republican government) some privileges ought to be given to those who can read and write. In France, every person is excluded, from giving his vote for any magistrate, who cannot do it in his own handwriting, sufficient time having been previously given for all persons to qualify themselves for doing it.

As the constitutions of all the separate states are different from each other, and are yet all of them truly republican (by which is to be understood that in all of them every individual has the same civil rights), and as the effect and operation of each of them may be seen by those who give due attention to all that passes in the several states, there is not in any part of the world so good an opportunity of acquiring political knowledge as in this country; especially as the people, having changed their institutions, have no invincible objections to make other changes that may be recommended to them*.

To this view of the constitution of the United States I shall take the liberty to subjoin a hint of what appears to me to be of particular importance as a *maxim of policy* in the present state of the country in general, though I have enlarged upon it on an other occasion.

* For this purpose I would recommend the account of the *Constitutions of the United States according to the last Amendments, &c.*, printed by Mr. Duane, A. D. 1802; and also the *Comparative View of all the Constitutions as well as that of the United States*, by Dr. Smith, of Virginia, to every well-educated young man in the country.

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It is, not to favour one class of the citizens more than another by any measure of government, especially the merchant more than the farmer.

Their employments are equally useful to the country, and therefore they are equally entitled to attention and protection, but not one more than the other.

If the merchant will risk his property at sea, let him calculate that risk, and abide by the consequence of it, as the husbandman must do with respect to the seed that he commits to the earth; and let not the country consider itself as under any obligation to indemnify one for his risks and losses any more than the other, especially as, in the case of the merchant, it might be the cause of a war with foreign states. If there should be danger from the depredations of privateers, or ships of war of any other kind, let the merchants have the power of defending their property, and let them and the insurers indemnify themselves, as they always will do, by the advanced price of their goods, but in no other way whatever. If in defending themselves they offend other nations, let them be given up to punishment as pirates. If the risk of a national quarrel be manifest, let the trade be prohibited.

If the expence of fitting out fleets for the protection of any branch of commerce exceeds the advantages that arise to the country from that commerce, there cannot be any wisdom in prosecuting it. In that case let that branch of commerce be abandoned; and it may be depended upon that the country will not long be in want of any valuable commodity with which the merchants of other countries can supply it, and that the competition will prevent the price from becoming exorbitant.

No proper *merchandise*, or the peculiar advantage of it, would be lost by this means; but only that par-

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ticular branch of industry and gain called the *carrying trade*, which would be left to other nations that could carry it on to more advantage; while the exchange of commodities, that of the articles that the country can spare, for those that it wants, would be the same as before; and the capital that had been employed in the carrying trade might be employed to more advantage some other way, of which the holders will be the best judges.

I shall only take the farther liberty to add, that the advantage of the whole equally requires that nothing be done in favour of any particular mode of gain, merely because it is exercised by *natives*. Let the goods of foreigners be brought to market on equal terms with theirs, because what every purchaser will then gain by the cheapness of a commodity, will far exceed what would be gained by the favoured nation;—and why should numbers suffer for the emolument of a few individuals? If it be not for the interest of the individual to carry on his business on these terms, let him employ himself and his resources in some other way, but without any direction or assistance from the state.

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